



## From the desk of the U.S. Fire Administrator:

“Amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is appropriate to recognize all those who are bravely facing one of the greatest national and global disasters of our time. Our country’s fire and emergency medical services personnel epitomize this year’s EMS Week theme by strong community commitment and desire to provide care for people in need.

The U.S. Fire Administration is proud to support the efforts of federal agencies, fire departments and EMS organizations in promoting EMS Week activities. I join the staff of the USFA to recognize the hard work of the fire and EMS personnel and all who answer the calls for medical assistance in their communities. Proudly, we are grateful for their selfless dedication to support the health care of our nation. During National EMS Week, I hope you will join us in recognizing fire and EMS departments for their courageous and compassionate service.”

*Fire Administrator Keith Bryant*

## EMS Week is May 17-23, 2020.

### “EMS Strong 2020 — Ready Today. Preparing for Tomorrow.”

**EMS Week** is a time to celebrate the contributions and sacrifices of emergency medical service (EMS) providers from all around our great nation. Never have these contributions and sacrifices been on such display as they are now. The COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged the American healthcare system as a whole and EMS has been no exception. As emergency medical technicians and paramedics have continued to endure the long hours and sometimes heart-wrenching situations inherent to the job over the last few months, they’ve had to do so with the knowledge that with every call they may come face to face with a highly contagious and potentially deadly airborne disease. Nevertheless, the brave men and women who have dedicated their lives to saving others under any condition took it in stride and continued to provide the best care to every patient with whom they came in contact. They faced their fears and the fears of the patients and patients’ families who couldn’t accompany their loved one to the hospital, often with the knowledge that there was a possibility that they would never be reunited. No matter what, EMS is at the frontline of providing healthcare and related services to the communities where they live and work. COVID-19 has brought unprecedented challenge and hardship to these communities and those that protect them, yet day after day, the EMS community overcomes the obstacles to provide life-saving care whenever, and wherever it is requested.

**Federal Interagency Committee on EMS (FICEMS):** The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) is actively involved in FICEMS. We collaborate with FICEMS ([www.ems.gov](http://www.ems.gov)) to provide timely, accurate, evidence-based information and guidance on all aspects of federal government EMS policy. The National Fire Programs (NFP) research and data efforts, National Fire Academy (NFA) courses, as well our staff’s development, input, and review of FICEMS [guidance documents](#) are tremendous support to positive progress and growth of our nation’s EMS systems.

#### National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) COVID-19 special study

Date range	January 1 - May 11, 2020
COVID-19 special study incidents	213,853
Participating fire departments	4,039
Participating states (including the Department of Defense)	44
Increase in incidents from the last report	16,247
Number of fire service personnel responded to confirmed or suspected incidents (year to date)	64,461

For more information contact [M. Long](#).

**New EMS online course:** USFA offers the NFA Online mediated course, "[Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program Management](#)," designed to provide the knowledge and skills needed to develop an mobile integrated healthcare program for your community.

**Resident EMS courses:** The EMS program is comprised of EMS system management coursework that includes "Management of Emergency Medical Services," "Emergency Medical Services: Quality Management," "EMS Functions in ICS" and "Emergency Medical Services: Incident Operations" focusing on disaster/mass casualty incident management from the EMS/medical focus. USFA continues to revise and develop the EMS program within those areas with courses such as "Mobile Integrated Healthcare Program Management" and "Management and Planning of Specialized Operations for EMS" which will pilot in September.

**The EMS/Prehospital Working Group of the COVID-19 Healthcare Resilience Task Force** salutes all the EMS providers working tirelessly to provide the highest level of care during this unprecedented crisis. We are also working tirelessly to provide the EMS system with the resources needed to continue the important work being done every day by prehospital providers around the country. We thank you and we stand behind you all. EMS makes a positive difference in this world every day and for that, you are to be commended. Thank you for all that you do.

**N-95 decontamination:** The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) social accounts have shared a [video](#) highlighting how Houston, TX uses the Battelle decontamination system to decontaminate N-95 respirators for reuse.

**Wildfire Awareness Month:** May is Wildfire Awareness Month. Many of us are adjusting to new schedules and routines due to the COVID-19 pandemic and our remote work posture. As hotter, drier weather of summer approaches, it brings increased risk of wildfire. This is a great time to help your communities take steps to make sure their home and families are prepared for wildfires and to remind their neighbors to do the same.

**National Emergency Training Center (NETC) COVID situation:** NETC training is currently suspended through July 4. Only essential employees are allowed on campus. Most NETC employees are teleworking. Temperature checks and mask/face coverings are required for campus access.

**Getting ready to repopulate campus:** NETC continues to make improvements to enhance the student and visitor experience. The campus entrance is being remodeled to include an improved entrance and check-in point. Buildings throughout campus (including the classroom buildings) are getting much needed new carpet and paint as well as new technology that will enhance the learning experience. NETC is close to releasing its re-entry plan with a focus on the health and wellness of staff and students. This plan will include directives from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA with an eye on the uniqueness of the campus. We anticipate sharing any plan with our stakeholders in the very near future.

**Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant application deadline extended:** In recognition of the economic hardship facing local jurisdictions and fire departments across the country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, DHS has waived the cost share, position cost limit, supplanting and minimum budget requirements for the [fiscal year 2019 SAFER Grant applicants](#). You can find more information about the waivers at [Bulletin 450](#). In addition, **the application period is extended until 5 p.m. ET, Wednesday, May 27, 2020.**