



- Announcer: Welcome to CRR Radio, from the Vision 20/20 Project.
- Ed Comeau: Welcome to CRR Radio. My name is Ed Comeau with the Vision 20/20 Project. Today, we're going to be talking about the upcoming standard from NFPA that will be focusing on community risk reduction. We have as our guest a point person from NFPA working on that standard, Chelsea Rubadou. Chelsea, could you take a minute and introduce yourself to our listeners?
- Chelsea Rubadou: Sure. Thanks, Ed. I'm Chelsea Rubadou, as Ed just introduced. I've been with NFPA for about three years now. I have been serving as the staff liaison for the committee that wrote NFPA 1300 pretty much since I started, and then within the past a little over a year, I was appointed to be one of the two CRR strategists within NFPA as we try to figure out how we can better serve the people working on community risk reduction. I do that work with Karen Berard-Reed. Maybe you've seen us at some of the conferences around lately. It's been a really fun project to work on.
- Ed Comeau: What was the history of the standard? How did it even come to be in the first place?
- Chelsea Rubadou: Well, one thing a lot of people don't know is that the committee that wrote 1300 also has been in charge of a couple other standards. They work on NFPA 1730, as well as NFPA 1452. The committee was formed to write 1730, which is all about fire prevention activities and deployment. Then since they had been working on that, they kind of noticed a gap around the community risk assessment and community risk reduction plan development. At the same time, Vision 20/20 has obviously been working on community risk for a while, so 1300 kind of came about as a combination of the committee recognizing that need, as well as a request from Vision 20/20 to create a standard that will help set the flag in the field and give people some solid guidelines to follow when trying to put together a community risk reduction plan.
- Ed Comeau: I think probably one of the things we should start out with is, this standard's not on the street yet, right? It's still in development.
- Chelsea Rubadou: Correct. It's very close to being on the street. It's sometimes frustrating when people ask about it, and I'm like, "Oh, you'll get it so soon." It's been being drafted since about 2014. People don't necessarily realize how much time gets put into NFPA standards, but it is a multi-year process. The first edition should be available for purchase around June 3rd. We are very excited to have some copies on hand at NFPA's annual conference and expo, and then people will be able to purchase them on their own, as well as both in print and PDF form.
- Ed Comeau: What is in the standard? What kind of topics are you guys covering in it?



Chelsea Rubadou: The title of the standard, I probably should've started with that, is the Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Risk Reduction Plan Development. What the standard does is, it really has ... I say guidance, but it's written in enforceable language, so it has "shalls," not "shoulds." But it walks you through the process to conduct a community risk assessment. It gives you some major points you should consider when doing your assessment. Then it tells you, kind of in chronological order, how to form a community risk reduction committee, how you should consult stakeholders in this process, and partnerships you should form. Then it gives some guidelines around putting a plan together based on e things you found out in your community risk assessment. Then the final chapter talks about how to implement your plan, but also how to evaluate it, because evaluation's a really important part.

Then there's annex material. That's found in the back of the standard. That is all kind of explanatory stuff. That'll elaborate a little bit more on the concepts that were put forth in the main chapters of the document. We also have a plan sample that was given to us from Chesterfield, Virginia. When this was written ... obviously now these samples are a few years old, and people now may have done some things that are a little more advanced. But that's the beauty of the standard, is that it's constantly being updated and edited. We anticipate that once this hits the streets and people start using it, we'll get a lot of feedback on how to change it and make it better for the future.

Ed Comeau: For those maybe not familiar with the development of an NFPA standard, could you go over how that is? It's not like you folks at NFPA are sitting up there writing these things, are you?

Chelsea Rubadou: We are not. That's one of my favorite fun facts, is that anybody but people who work for NFPA can write the standard. The standard is put together by a committee of people. They're all volunteers, and they're all from the field. These are people who are out there putting together community risk reduction plans or evaluating them. They're really the ones out there doing the work. They are appointed by NFPA and the chair of the committee, who is also a volunteer, and we have about seven different classifications for the volunteers on the committee.

We also work hard to maintain balance, because we don't want one certain classification to really drive all the requirements in the standard. Some of those classifications are consumers, enforcers, insurance, installers, maintainers, the labor force, manufacturers, special experts, users, and then applied research. We structure the committee so that no one classification can make up more than a third of the committee. We really strive for that balance.

Then what this committee does is, we sit down about once a year when the document is actually in cycle and we review any feedback that has come in on



the standard. This is the part that the public doesn't know, or that some of the public doesn't know, is that anybody in the public can view the standard on our website. It's www.nfpa.org/1300. You can view the document there as it is, and anybody can propose changes to the document. If you don't agree with something, or if you have certain experience that you think should be included in this document, any sort of change or addition or deletion that you think the document should have, anybody in the public can submit that. Then when we sit down as a committee, the committee members review all of these public inputs and decide whether or not they should be included in the document, and how they should be written if they are to be included.

Ed Comeau: As a new standard, there's a lot that's going to be coming down the road to this. Right now, there are really three chapters that we're looking at. Community risk assessment, community risk reduction, plan development, and then community risk reduction plan implementation and evaluation. Can you give us a little bit more on what is in each chapter there, maybe starting with community risk assessment?

Chelsea Rubadou: Sure thing. The community risk assessment chapter is chapter five in 1300. The front chapters have some references, some general definitions, that sort of thing. But within the community risk assessment chapter, one of the biggest things is, we outlined what we call profiles. These are the things that we think that people doing CRA should touch upon within their assessment. Some of these profiles, I'll just read them off to you, are demographics, geographics, building stock, public safety response agencies, community service organizations, hazards, economics, past loss and event history, and critical infrastructure systems.

That's nine big profiles. A CRA can include way more than that, and we realize that different communities will have different amounts of data or information about each of these profiles, so everyone's CRA is going to look a little different. But the committee felt strongly that those nine things should at least be considered during the assessment.

Other things in that chapter talk about when to ... At this point, you should be identifying some stakeholders. It also mentions that stakeholders, as well as the public that you're serving, may have some information and data that could help you with your community risk assessment. It also talks about a basic methodology for conducting a CRA. That has to do with collecting the data and what kinds of data should be included. There's a heavy force now in the field on quantitative data, but we do recognize that there is a place for qualitative data as well. We don't want to rule out some of that institutional knowledge that we know departments have about their community. That stuff is still important to know. So yeah, we talk about collecting data, analyzing data, identifying gaps, and eventually prioritizing your data as well.



- Ed Comeau: Okay, and then it moves into the next chapter, which is community risk reduction plan development. What are you folks covering in there?
- Chelsea Rubadou: This chapter starts out by describing how to put together a CRR committee. That's kind of a big thing that people may not realize. A lot of departments have maybe one person in charge of this. I don't think a lot of departments currently have resources to put together a whole team, but it really will make your life easier if you do put together a team to put together a community risk reduction plan. Your team doesn't have to be all people within your organization. It would make your plan more encompassing if you bring in some partners at that stage.
- It talks about how to identify your lead person or your lead organization, and then some of the responsibilities that the committee should take on. That includes things like prioritizing those risks from your assessment, addressing your root causes, and putting together some goals and objectives, and then eventually getting to developing the strategy and the programs to help reduce those risks that you decided to focus on.
- Ed Comeau: You used the word partners. Probably what you learned as you were putting this together is, no one organization can do it all. Partnerships are really critically important, aren't they?
- Chelsea Rubadou: Yes. That's definitely something I think everybody on the committee believes, as well as NFPA.
- Ed Comeau: We're going to take a short break from our podcast to let you know about a resource from the Vision 20/20 Project that you might find helpful. When it comes to CRR problems or issues, you're not alone. There may very well be someone else that has faced the same problem and found a solution. The real question is, how do you find that person?
- CRRNet is a listserv from the Vision 20/20 Project made up of hundreds of people from across the nation involved in community risk reduction. It is a great forum for posting questions and answers, and is an invaluable resource for those involved in providing community risk reduction. It's totally free, and you can sign up for it at www.strategicfire.org/CRRNet. Again, that is www.strategicfire.org/CRRNet. And now, let's get back to our podcast.
- Then we get into chapter seven, community risk reduction plan implementation and evaluation. What's in this one?
- Chelsea Rubadou: Well, it is pretty self-explanatory, but I will give you a little more detail. First, it goes into implementation. This talks about putting together which organizations or individuals should be in charge of which parts of the plan. You just mentioned partners, and this is a huge place to bring in your partners to help put your plans

into action. It also has you put together a timeline. The standard itself doesn't mandate a certain timeline for your strategies, it just tells you to stick to the timeline that you create. It also has these committees identify how you're going to collect data throughout your program, and what your plan to communicate with your community is. It's all about just going through these steps, making sure that your plan is complete, that you've thought through all these things, such as your timeline and your communication, that sort of thing.

Then it goes into evaluation, as the title suggests. In this section, we talk about different ways to evaluate, or different steps to evaluation, I should say. There is process evaluation, impact evaluation, and outcome evaluation. These three things, I've seen in the field, are sometimes often mixed up or the names ... They're treating impact evaluation more like outcome evaluation, that sort of thing. I think the standard may help bring some clarity to how communities should be evaluating their programs, because it's really important that the programs that we're doing for community risk reduction are actually having an impact on the risks that we decided to tackle in the first place.

Then there is a small part about reporting, because we want people to make sure they're tracking what they're doing, especially if you're going to have an enforcer eventually look at this, or if you're going for some sort of accreditation. You want to make sure that you have all your ducks in a row, and you're really documenting things as you go along.

Then finally, the last part of it talks about community risk reduction plan modification. This is just a reminder that you should be constantly evaluating your programs as you're doing them, and if you're not seeing the impacts that you set out to have, you want to be modifying that plan as you go. There's really no need to wait five years to make a modification that you identified should have taken place earlier.

Ed Comeau: Then you had mentioned earlier the annex material, and there's quite a bit in Annex A, or explanatory material. To me, this kind of seems like the meat of it. That's where ... You know, certainly the language in the standard itself in the different chapters, but this is really where there's just a lot of really helpful information.

Chelsea Rubadou: Yes, there is a lot of good stuff in the annex. That's why the committee decided to put it all in. It's kind of just to add some extra background, or some extra explanation to the standard. Whereas the standard needs to be written in enforceable language, the annex can kind of elaborate more on some concepts.

Some things it does is, the annex helps define community, because that's a question we've received a lot. It's still a vague definition. The annex says that the community can be defined as a social group of any size whose members



reside in a specific locality, share a government, have a common cultural and historical heritage, or rely on the same critical infrastructure systems. They can vary in size and description and can form an entire state, county, city, or any sized geographic service area for the AHJ.

Whenever we throw the AHJ into the mix, you can tell that people are going to have different interpretations of what a community can be defined as. That was an important thing I think they put in there, since a lot of people are asking, you know, "Is my community my census block group, or is it my neighborhood, my city?" So I think that that sort of background will help people.

There's also helpful stuff about what can be considered an acceptable level of risk. There is examples of some of the profiles that you should consider, where people may not have a clear view of what that means in the chapter itself. There is examples in the annex. There's also some helpful tools to get down to root causes of problems. There's a risk assessment matrix to help you prioritize your risks. They go into details on the five Es, which we've known as the five Es of prevention, but hopefully we can start talking about them like the five Es of risk reduction moving forward.

There's lots of good goal-setting examples, charts you can use, that sort of stuff. Is there anything that stuck out to you when you were looking through it as being especially helpful?

Ed Comeau:

Well, I was just really impressed by the volume of information in there, which is only going to grow as the standard gets out there and more people are able to contribute to it. I really like the fact that you did have a lot of meat in there.

One of the things I do want to mention to our listeners is a couple of resources that were used in this standard from Vision 20/20 that are also available to them as well. I'll have links in our show notes here, but one's how to develop a risk reduction strategy, and how to implement it. They're both available from the Vision 20/20 Project. Again, like I said, I'll have links to those in the show notes as well.

You really developed this from, it looks like, a pretty comprehensive and broad-base volume of information to put this all together.

Chelsea Rubadou:

Yeah. The committee does a good job at trying to include perspectives from all around, different organizations. They also try to do their best to provide informational resources to users of the document, too. I know Vision 20/20's definitely listed. There are some others too, like NIST publications, as well as other NFPA standards. Some FEMA resources as well. I expect that that section will definitely grow as soon as the public gets their hands on this, because so



many people are starting to come out with new resources for community risk reduction these days. It'll be great to include all those in the standard.

Ed Comeau: I've been involved with Vision 20/20 for some time now, and I've certainly seen a growth in the whole adoption of CRR across the country. Are you seeing that same sort of movement in the past few years, how more and more fire departments are embracing CRR?

Chelsea Rubadou: Yeah, we have noticed a growth of that. I hope that it will continue to grow. We also have still met departments ... I was actually talking to a local department recently, and they were saying, 'Yeah, you know, we talk about it at our meetings almost every month, but it ends up on the back burner, because we just don't have enough resources.' Then I go into a whole spiel of, 'Yes, but CRR helps you use those resources better, and the more you can do CRR, the more freed up you'll feel to do some of these programs, et cetera.' But there definitely is a huge interest in community risk reduction right now within the field. That's why working in this project has been so exciting. It's just really feeling all that energy and enthusiasm for CRR.

Ed Comeau: Kind of along that line, both you and I were at the CRR leadership conference in Reno a few weeks ago, and I happened to be just sitting there talking to a fire chief who was attending just kind of on a spur of the moment, almost a whim. He said, 'Well, you know, this was coming up, an opportunity, so I decided to attend it. Didn't really know anything about CRR.' And boy, the light bulb really went on. He said, 'Boy, I just have to start doing this. I had no idea.' My first reaction was, 'Well, jeez, how could you not know about it?' But then also, well, that's exactly the kind of person we want to reach out and become a convert, don't we?

Chelsea Rubadou: Yes, absolutely. You kind of wonder what actually got him there, but it's so great that he thought this might be important, and when he got there realized it's very important. One thing we're hoping that the standard does too is, we know NFPA is a pretty big name for people that use standards, and especially the fire service, so we're hoping that putting out a community risk reduction standard really gets the attention of some of those people as well. Obviously, the IFC conference was ... I thought it was a really great program, and it seemed like a very successful conference. And the Vision 20/20 symposium that's every other year always seems to get a ton of attention and excitement too. So the hope is, maybe NFPA will help bring in even more converts as well. We kind of all have our feelers out into different communities and different types of stakeholders. When we're all working together, I think we can really bring more people on board for CRR.

Ed Comeau: What are some of the other things that NFPA is doing in the field of CRR?



Chelsea Rubadou:

Well, we've been working for the past year or so just trying to explore kind of the landscape of CRR. Karen and myself went on a listening tour last year. We met with a ton of CRR users and CRR leaders, went to a bunch of different conferences, both within the fire service and outside of the fire service. What we did was just ask people, "What do you think of CRR? What types of stuff are you doing? What's worked? What are your roadblocks?" All those kinds of questions, just to figure out where there are gaps in the industry, and where NFPA could fit into that.

One gap that we noticed was, a CRA was a difficult thing for people to do, the community risk assessment. But according to both our standard and our own philosophy, that is the most important part of doing a community risk reduction program, because if you don't know what your risks are, the programs you're putting in place may not be the most effective. We're currently working on launching a digital tool to help people conduct their community risk assessments. We aren't quite ready to announce it with any more detail than that, but you can keep on the lookout. It's going to be exciting. We can't wait to really get into it and to explain it to people in the field.

Another thing you can keep an eye out for is, Karen and I have been writing a public-facing whitepaper, and we're planning to launch that by June, so right before our annual conference. That whitepaper will share with the public some of the things we learned last year, and we're hoping it'll encourage people to maybe start working on some other gaps that we identified, as well as get visibility into what NFPA is really doing to help serve them.

In addition to that, our annual conference in San Antonio this year in June is going to have a big community risk reduction presence. We have a few exciting educational sessions, as well as a workshop going on. Anybody who's interested in attending that, I would definitely encourage to go register and keep an eye out for those specific sessions at conference.

The final thing is really the standard. That's the one big document that we're really excited about this year. As I mentioned before, we think it'll really help bring the field forward.

Ed Comeau:

Well, we've been talking with Chelsea Rubadou, who's a community risk reduction strategist with the NFPA, about the new NFPA standard 1300 on community risk assessment and community risk reduction plan development that'll be coming out soon. Chelsea, I really appreciate you taking the time to join us today.

Chelsea Rubadou:

Thank you. It's been great. It was awesome talking with you.



- Ed Comeau: Well, we're back here again with a little add-on to the interview we just did with Chelsea. When we last talked to her a month or so ago, there were some things that NFPA had in the works but they really couldn't talk about, so Chelsea has come back to fill us in. Chelsea, you actually are out there in Kansas right now. Tell us what's going on.
- Chelsea Rubadou: All right. Well, I'm calling in from Kansas City. I'm really excited to announce that NFPA is collaborating with mySidewalk. They're a government tech company. They use community intelligence. They work in the digital space. We're really excited to be working with them to develop a digital tool to help communities conduct their community risk assessment.
- Ed Comeau: Tell us a little bit more. Is it ready to go? Is it ready for primetime? Is it in a pilot stage? Are you developing it? What are you guys at right now?
- Chelsea Rubadou: We are going to be starting a pilot program very shortly once we get the tool up and running. What the pilot program will do is offer up to 50 communities the chance to use this tool for free, with the expectation that they'll be providing us with frequent feedback. We really want to learn from these communities what works for them, what do they like about it, what don't they, what's missing. The overall goal of learning from them for that one year will be to be able to produce a tool at the end that really suits the broadest audience. We want to make a product that is best fit for the most number of people out there.
- Ed Comeau: When do you figure the pilot program will be starting up?
- Chelsea Rubadou: I anticipate within the next two months. We don't have an exact timeline at the moment, but the applications to apply to be a pilot participant are open now. Everyone can access that at nfpa.org/crr.
- Ed Comeau: After the year is up, after you've created it, pilot tested it, what's going to happen with the tool at that point in time?
- Chelsea Rubadou: Oh. Well, while we're testing the tool, we'll be building in sequence, updating things as we see fit, making changes that we think will work best for a broader use of the tool, and we'll decide how and if we go to market. We're going to learn a lot in the pilot to see if it's a viable product.
- Ed Comeau: Okay. Well, Chelsea, thanks for this update. Really appreciate it. As I said, we've got an update here from Chelsea Rubadou from NFPA about the new digital tool coming out that's going to help communities with CRA, or their community risk assessment. If you want more information, what's that URL again, Chelsea?
- Chelsea Rubadou: It's nfpa.org/crr.



New CRR NFPA Standard 1300 and CRA Pilot Project
Conversation with NFPA CRR Strategist Chelsea Rubadou
CRR Radio www.StrategicFire.org/CRRradio#nfpa1300

Ed Comeau: Oh, okay. Well, thanks for joining us Chelsea. We'll be back in touch with you, I think, in a little while, just to see how things are going.

Chelsea Rubadou: Great. Thank you.

Ed Comeau: Well, we're deep into our third season of CRR Radio. You can find all of our past episodes at www.strategicfire.org/crrradio, and on Apple Podcast, where you can also subscribe and get each episode as it comes out, not missing a single one. CRR Radio is a production of the Vision 20/20 Project, is edited by Rich Palmer, and produced by me, Ed Comeau. Thanks for listening, and we'll see you next time.

Announcer: Thanks for joining us on CRR Radio from the Vision 20/20 Project. For more information on community risk reduction, please visit us at www.strategicfire.org.