Category V

Criterion 5B: Public Education Program
A public education program is in place and directed toward reducing specific risks in a manner consistent with the agency’s mission and as identified within the community risk assessment and standards of cover. The agency should conduct a thorough risk-analysis as part of activities in Category II to determine the need for a specific public education program.

Summary:
Commitment to saving and protecting lives and property is the mission of Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical. Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s Prevention and Training Divisions strives to reduce life safety hazards and property loss through a pro-active program of inspections and public education.

Education is a key component, opening the doors for public awareness to the potential hazards they face and how they can combat them with proper knowledge and life safety awareness. The Training Division oversees Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s public education program. The Division Chief of Training is responsible for overall coordination of all aspects of Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s education mission. Teaching the various programs is handled by on- and off-duty personnel.

Six Public Education Specialists (two on each shift) provide for delivery of the program and work with the shift personnel to deliver the public education program.
Performance Indicators:

CC 5B.1 The public education program (such as development and delivery) 

targets specific risks, behaviors, and audiences identified through 
incident, demographic, program data analysis, community risk 
assessment, and standards of cover.

Description
Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s public education programs are developed for 
specific audiences and are consistent with SOP 603.10 Public Education Program. 
Educational programs are designed to meet specific goals identified through national 
trends or local issues. Public Education Specialists provide programs to address specific 
issues and as requested by civic organizations or business groups.

Appraisal
Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s public education programs are meeting the 
needs of the community. Youth Fire Setter Intervention, fire drills for businesses and 
schools, senior citizen classes, University Resident Advisor, Greek Academy, Fire Safety 
House tours, smoke detector placement, and fire extinguisher training are all examples of 
meeting local needs for education. Instructors attend seminars, conferences, and schools 
to keep apprised of trends in fire prevention and safety. In 2017, 115 public education 
events were presented reaching over 7,300 citizens. The departments Facebook page has 
3,412 followers and an average of 8,721 people were reached through social media in 
2017 as reported in the 2017 Annual Report.

Plan
As Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical becomes aware of local needs and recognizes 
new national trends, programs will be implemented to address them. Lawrence-Douglas 
County Fire Medical networks with other fire educators on local and national levels, and 
encourages its instructors to attend seminars and schools to keep them apprised of current 
trends and ideas in the field of fire prevention and education.
References
SOP 603.10 Public Education
SOP 603.20 Youth Firesetters Prevention and Intervention Program
SOP 108.90 Community Village Lawrence Program
2017 Annual Report
CC 5B.2 The program has **sufficient staff with specific expertise** to meet the public education program goals, objectives, and identified community risks.

**Description**

The Division Chief of Training coordinates all public education programs for Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical. The six Public Education Specialists are members who, in addition to their regular job duties, conduct the public education activities, research and develop new programs, and evaluate the current programs. These six Public Education Specialists are assigned two per shift, and all members on each shift are expected to assist with the public education activities as needed. In addition, Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical has certified CPR and AED instructors.

**Appraisal**

Many public education programs must be delivered during times that often conflict with scheduled training and duty assignments. This often poses a staffing challenge for the Operations Division. By providing numerous public education programs, in addition to daily job duties, members are challenged on a frequent basis. Due to the department not having a full-time employee dedicated to this program, resources must be taken from other divisions and programs to provide for this mission. The six specialists have been challenged to keep up on other related duties.

**Plan**

Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical should explore the possibility of hiring a full-time employee assigned solely to the Training Division for public education assignments. This position would be responsible for evaluating new and current programs, maintaining Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s website and be a main contact for public education information. The addition of this position would minimize the impact of scheduling and staffing conflicts on the Operations Division.

**References**

Activity Calendar (30-day sample)
SOP 603.10 Public Education
The agency conducts a **formal and documented appraisal, at least annually**, to determine the **impacts of the public education program and its efforts in risk reduction based on community assessment, standards of cover, and measures performance**.

**Description**

The department uses an appraisal system that reviews the content of Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s public education programs. The purpose of these appraisals is to ensure the programs are compliant with current statistical trends. In the elimination of unacceptable risks, statistical data generated by the Training Division is capable of presenting trend analysis that can indicate the need for changes in delivered programs. Manager meetings, with all Executive Staff members and Captains, are also held to discuss issues related to the Public Education program.

Annually, the Public Education Program Manager conducts a formal and documented program appraisal at the monthly manager’s meeting. The appraisal includes an analysis of standard operating procedures, equipment and training to determine the impact of the program. At least two goals and objectives are identified for the next program appraisal cycle.

**Appraisal**

The appraisal system currently in place relies on the experience Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical has in the fire service and public education, as well as the feedback received every time a presentation is given. Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s team approach using Public Education Specialists and operations members permits it to plan and implement more effective programs to better meet the needs of the community. The annual program appraisal presented at the Monthly Manager’s meeting provides useful feedback on evaluation of the program.

**Plan**

The current system of evaluation is working and meeting Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical’s needs. Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical tracks and tabulates data for
public education activities. The department needs an additional full-time public educator to ensure consistent program delivery, program development, documentation and assist with the management of shift educators. The additional staff would also reduce the impact on the Operations Division.

References
Public Education Participant Survey
Public Education Program Annual Program Appraisal
5B.4 There are programs in place that identify large loss potential or high risk audiences (such as low socio-economic status, age, cultural/ethnic differences where appropriate), forge partnerships with those who serve those constituencies, and enable specified programs to mitigate fires and other emergency incidents (such as home safety visits, smoke alarm installations, free bicycle helmet programs, falls prevention programs, etc.).

**Description**

The Department offers free residential home safety inspections that are designed to identify fire hazards that may exist in residential structures. This service is provided for all families. The Department also offers free smoke alarms with installation specifically for low-income families. Another program offered is the free bicycle helmet program. This program provides bicycle safety awareness and free bicycle helmets for the youth of Lawrence.

**Appraisal**

The Departments fire protection and injury prevention programs are meeting the needs for the community. Through record keeping, the demand for home safety inspections, smoke alarms, and bike helmets increases yearly. There were 7,332 inspections performed in 2017 as documented in the 2017 Annual Report.

**Plan**

The Department plans to continue offering these programs. Furthermore, as the Department becomes aware of local needs and recognizes new national trends, programs will be implemented to address them.

**References**

SOP 603.10 Public Education

SOP 108.40 Wheeled Sport Safety Program

SOP 108.90 Community Village Lawrence Program

2017 Annual Report
5B.5 The agency should evaluate the **juvenile firesetter intervention program**. This program should refer all juveniles identified as involved in fire-play or fire setting behavior for educational intervention or other intervention services.

**Description**

Lawrence Douglas County Fire Medical’s Youth Firesetters Prevention and Intervention Program is offered to minors, generally from 5-17 years of age. Youth will be recommended to complete the program that have been identified through fire investigation or referred to the department due to unsafe interest or use of fire. The program is conducted by the department’s six Public Education Specialists. Once a youth has been referred, the Program Manager will assign it to a Public Education Specialists who will schedule a date, time and location to conduct the interview. Additional forms, referrals and follow-up may be required for a successful outcome.

**Appraisal**

The Departments Youth Firesetter Prevention and Intervention Programs are meeting the needs of the community. The program has provided education and safety information for the safe use of fire and been a useful tool to at-risk youth.

**Plan**

The Department plans to continue offering this program. As Lawrence Douglas County Fire Medical becomes aware of youth fire related intervention needs, it will continue to provide education and safety information for the safe use of fire. The Department will also continue to build internal and external relationships with partners such as Bert Nash Community Health.

**References**

SOP 603.20 Youth Firesetters Prevention and Intervention Program