Learning Objective: *The student shall explain the goal of the fire prevention/risk reduction bureau leader in using multiple interventions.*

Being in command of a fire prevention/risk-reduction bureau or unit is one of the most challenging, yet rewarding, positions in a fire department. It is also one of the most important positions in a fire department. This statement is true regardless if one is overseeing a large bureau, leading a small unit, or carrying out many responsibilities in a small organization. The position carries tremendous responsibility because the leader often has authority or coresponsibility with the chief of the department over a wide range of programs. While the job is sometimes reactionary in nature, it is mostly a proactive position that requires vision, leadership and mastery of a diverse set of skills. The ultimate job of the bureau leader is to ensure that risks in the community are addressed both efficiently and effectively. The bureau leader needs to have a professional skill set, so he or she is competent in the role of administrator, department senior staff member, mentor, politician, problem-solver and visionary.

The structure of a risk-reduction bureau will vary based upon the department and community. Some prevention bureaus are responsible for public education, plan review, code enforcement and fire investigations. Others may include a mix. Staffing will obviously vary based upon the types and levels of services provided.

It is the leader's responsibility to develop a team-based integrated approach utilizing a combination of prevention interventions. The goal of utilizing multiple interventions is twofold: 1. to prevent the incidents from occurring and 2. to reduce or mitigate the impact of the incident when prevention fails. Prevention interventions, known as the Five Es, include:

— **Education:** Teaching the public and responders what risks threaten their community and what they can do to help prevent and/or mitigate the impact.

— **Engineering:** Suggesting the use of technology, such as smoke alarms and residential sprinklers, to help prevent and/or mitigate target risks.

— **Enforcement:** Passing, strengthening and enforcing codes, laws and ordinances.

— **Economic incentive:** Working to incorporate incentives that support risk reduction such as tax incentives for installation of residential sprinklers or free smoke alarms.

— **Emergency response:** Support the existence of an adequately staffed, equipped and trained group of emergency responders.

It is the responsibility of the risk-reduction leader to work with his or her organization and community to identify local risk priorities and address them in a strategic manner.

Source: National Fire Academy's course "Managing Effective Fire Prevention Programs," December 2012.