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

“I would like to thank the National Fallen Firefighter Foundation’s leadership, staff and volunteers for their successful presentations this past October 4th. The firefighters of our nation have faced many challenges this year and so has the NFFF. I was honored to be a part of the virtual remembrance ceremony from the campus of the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland. While planning is underway to bring families of the fallen to the Memorial in the future, this was a very strong demonstration to remind us of the sacrifice and dangers all firefighters face daily. I want to also thank you for your efforts to conduct successful programs and projects for the 2020 National Fire Prevention Week – Safety in the Kitchen. I am honored to be a part of the fire service and you should all be proud of the work you do toward a fire-safe America.”

G. Keith Bryant, U.S. Fire Administrator

America Burning — Wildland Urban Interface (WUI): WUI is the fastest growing land use area in most of the U.S. and with that there is an increased risk of the severity and impact of wildfires. To address this, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), under the direction of Administrator Bryant, in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior, awarded a contract to the International Association of Fire Chiefs, to study the WUI challenges by bringing together individuals, groups and agencies with an interest in reducing risk and losses to lives, property and natural resources within WUI areas. The study will assist in accelerating national awareness of the American WUI problem and inform potential priorities for future direction and activities. The report of findings will be available in the fall of 2021.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant – COVID-19 Supplemental Program (AFG-S): The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing an additional opportunity for volunteer and combination fire departments to apply for funding under the fiscal year (FY) 2020 AFG-S to support the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related supplies by the fire service community to help prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus pandemic. The purpose of AFG-S is to award grants directly to fire departments to enhance their ability to protect the health and safety of the public, as well as first responders, through the purchase of PPE and essential supplies related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteer and combination fire departments in any of the 50 states as well as fire departments in the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any federally recognized Indian tribe or tribal organization are eligible. For more information on applying for a grant, attend one of the webinars designed to explain the process and answer questions.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding: The BRIC FY 2021 application period opened Sept. 30, 2020. BRIC provides funding to states, local communities, tribes, and territories for eligible mitigation activities to reduce risks from natural hazards. FY 2021 funding priorities include incentivizing mitigation of public infrastructure and community lifelines. For more information, please review the BRIC Notice of Funding Opportunity or contact your state or tribal office for hazard mitigation programs. The deadline for all applications is Jan. 29, 2021.

Cohesive Strategy: USFA remains closely engaged with our cohesive strategy partners as communities manage their response and recovery. We are continually adding new resources to the USFA WUI Toolkit to support the fire service as they help their communities prepare, respond and recover after a wildfire disaster. USFA recently published new resources on Fire-Adapted Community, a new success story of two communities who took steps to reduce their wildfire risk, and resources for current codes and standards to help communities repair and rebuild. Community Mitigation Assistance Teams may be requested before, during or after a wildfire to support community mitigation efforts. USFA is also providing wildfire safety outreach materials to support fire service partners in their community response. The wide-scale impact of these events illustrates the risk to communities in wildfire prone areas and reinforces the importance of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy goals to create more fire-adapted communities, resilient landscapes and safe and effective wildfire response.

The Cohesive Strategy in 2020: Dynamic Adaptation in a Novel World: An online event, presented by International Association of Wildland Fire in partnership with Wildland Fire Leadership Council and its western, southeastern and northeastern Regional Strategy Committees, will be held Oct. 28, 2020 11:00-2:00 p.m. MDT. Registration is open to everyone with an interest in wildland fire.