

# The Sig House

*Timely reminders: A new year – a new season of activity, dedication, work, enjoyment and pleasure!*

Welcome back to a new school year! With that in mind it is time to catch up on various matters of importance so that 2004-2005 is both a beneficial and rewarding experience for all. As Chapter Houses open each year, it's important that the physical and operational components be reviewed.

## **Please review key areas:**

- Physical appearance – the 1<sup>st</sup> appearance of the chapter house **will** have a lasting impression on new freshmen, prospective Rushees, Parents, Alumni, University officials, students and the community. What will their impression be?
- Tenants: Even though they are “Brothers” they do have a responsibility to the Chapter and the House Corporation!
  - Lease Agreements should be signed by all residents
  - Damage deposits should be tendered by all residents
  - Rooms should be inspected at move-in and move-out and an Inspection form completed and signed as to condition. Too often the long term maintenance budget or the reserve fund is used for damage caused by individuals that should be assessed against their deposit (broken windows, torn or soiled carpets, broken furniture, etc.)
  - House Rules should be included in the Lease Agreements and clearly posted in the House including “do’s and don’ts” of in-room appliances, added lighting, candles, etc.
- Safety rules, evacuation routes and emergency procedures should be posted and reviewed at an early chapter meeting and again at the beginning of each semester
- Inspections: The House Corp., House Manager and Consul should inspect and document the condition of the entire property, especially operating condition of all life safety systems:
  - Fire alarm system
  - Smoke detectors with fully charged batteries in all sleeping rooms
  - Fire extinguishers in place, fully charged, currently inspected and operational
  - Exit Signs and Emergency lights
  - Hallways, stairwells and exits clear from obstructions
  - **A professional fire inspection is recommended annually or more often**
  - Numerous Greek community chapter houses have suffered fires this past year with at least one resulting in multiple deaths at the ATO house at Mississippi. A tragedy occurred even though their house had a recent Fire Inspection!
- Operations: Planning and Budgeting:

- Review last year operations as to successes and weaknesses to plan to build on the success and make any needed fixes.
- Forward Planning and Budgeting for needed repairs and periodic maintenance (short term and long term) with goals, timelines and assigned responsibilities.
- Public Relations Education of the Chapter and Alumni:
  - House Corp Financial Condition and Budget (“Where does our money go?”)
  - Improvements and Maintenance of the last year
  - Planned improvements
  - Insurance costs
  - Personal responsibility to pay rent and dues. Generally, the sole source of income for a House Corp is the rent from the Chapter

### *Chapter Liability Insurance Update:*

By emergency Executive Committee Regulation amendment procedure, the Executive Committee amended ECR 6.02-i-4 on August 2, 2004 to require all United States Chapters to provide proof of a minimum of \$6,000,000 in general liability coverage. The minimum coverage requirement for our Canadian Chapters remains at \$1,000,000 Canadian. The Executive Committee acted in accordance with the emergency amendment procedure to allow this alteration prior to the school year notice to be made, to allow the Risk Management Foundation to place coverage for it's member subscription program and for chapter budgeting purposes.

The amended language in the context of the ECR reads as follows:

“6.02-i-4 All U.S. undergraduate chapters are required to provide proof of a minimum of \$6,000,000 general liability coverage naming Sigma Chi Fraternity/Corporation as additional insured. Canadian chapters are required to provide proof of a minimum of \$1,000,000 Canadian in general liability coverage. General liability insurance policy coverages for all chapters must include host liquor liability coverage and hired/non-owned auto coverage. All local groups must provide proof of general liability insurance, consistent with the requirements listed above, naming Sigma Chi Fraternity/Corporations additional insured before they are duly installed as a chapter of Sigma Chi.”

### *Featured Topic: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA):*

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a set of regulations developed by the U.S. Department of Labor that went into effect on August 23, 2004 and applies to all US chapters. These regulations provide that workers are generally entitled to receive time and a half pay for all hours worked over 40 hours a week. A few key provisions of the FLSA include:

- Overtime pay exemptions do not apply to manual laborers or other "blue collar" workers.
- The prior \$155 a week minimum salary level for exemption increases to \$455 a week. Thus, employees earning less than \$23,660 a year must generally be paid overtime.

The FLSA regulations may potentially have some impact on house corporations or chapters that employ cooks, custodial workers, or house parents. Chris Moran at HQ has a pamphlet that can be faxed to you regarding the new overtime rules if you need more information.

### *Sigma Chi Long Range Plan*

The Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) continues its work with the next major meeting on November 11-13. The Board of Grand Trustees continues to work with the Imperative 5 Team on “Ensure a Fulfilling Fraternal Experience” which includes “Safe, Adequate and Affordable Housing.”

[Board of Grand Trustees](#) Please contact your assigned Trustee if you have any questions or would like assistance.

Contact information is below. If your officers or contact information have changed please let your Trustee know.

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