



# The Sig House

A Bimonthly Housing Newsletter  
From the Board of Grand Trustees

November 2003  
[www.sighouseonline.com](http://www.sighouseonline.com)

## Your Trustee

Please contact your assigned Trustee if you have any questions or would like assistance. Contact information is below. If the officers or contact information have changed, please let your Trustee know.

## House Corp. Survey

Thanks to those of you who have already responded to our September 3 House Corp Survey to help the Trustees understand how we can best assist you by learning more about your House Corporation, and your current activities and needs as well as your goals and objectives are for the coming years. If you have yet to complete a survey, please take the time to do so (attached).

The survey tabulation is attached. Your survey information and requests for assistance have been forwarded to your respective Grand Trustee, or to other Fraternity entities, who will address those items with you individually. Here are the results.

## Timely reminders:

- House Security during semester Break: Many chapter houses fall victim to break-ins, burglaries and vandalism while the chapter house is largely unoccupied during semester break. Frozen pipes and fire are also potential concerns. House Corps are encouraged to remind the residents to practice normal "vacation" preparations:
  - Take all valuables home
  - Ensure all doors and windows are fully closed and locked
  - Leave exterior security lights on (with timer if possible)
  - Leave some interior lights on with a timer to illuminate in the evening
  - Close window blinds, shades, etc to prevent a temptation with computers, etc in plain view
  - Ensure fire alarm and security/burglar alarms are operational.
  - Notify campus security and police that the house will be unoccupied (from date to date)
  - Remind the Quaestor to not leave any cash, checks or house credit cards in the house
  - Adjust heating setting to prevent pipes from freezing
  - Ensure that all electric blankets, coffeemakers, etc are off
  - Stop newspaper and mail delivery
- RMF Insurance: Confirm your chapter has paid it's RMF Insurance in full or registered for a payment plan (*deadline was Sept 15*)
- Alumni Invitations: Confirm that a date has been set and invitations sent to both chapter and local alumni for your annual alumni events (Homecoming, Chapter Anniversary, Initiation, etc.)
- RMF Designated Driver Program Grant: Confirm that your chapter has a [Designated Driver Program](#) in place and has submitted the RMF Grant Application for the \$1,000 grant (due March 31, 2004). More information is available at <http://www.rmfonline.org/>
- HQ Reports: Confirm that the chapter has submitted its reports to HQ timely and remains in good

standing:

- a) Pledge Report (Forms 400 A&B) and pledge installation fees are due within 10 days of formal pledging;
- b) Semi-annual Membership Report and Dues were due October 1;
- c) Request for Approval of Initiation (Form 400C) is due 21 days before Initiation.

### [Province Conferences](#)

A list of Province Conference dates and locations is attached. You may wish to contact your Grand Praetor about participating, as the Grand Trustees will participate in most conferences.

### [Featured Topic: Chapter House Safety and Bedroom Lofts](#)

We've all read about chapter house fires and it is potentially one of the worst fears of a House Corp. What can House Corps do to minimize risk? Many things, including an annual "life safety" inspection.

Many of our chapter houses have sleeping "lofts" or "platforms" that were constructed by the undergraduate residents. If they were not designed by a licensed architect or engineer or installed by a licensed contractor, there is a potential that some do not meet the applicable building and fire codes. This could present a potentially dangerous life safety issue for the residents and a corresponding liability to the House Corp.

Therefore, each House Corp and Chapter is encouraged to have any lofts or platforms examined by a local licensed engineer or architect for code compliance. Building codes vary from one governing authority to another, so there are no universally applicable guidelines. However, many municipal building codes have adopted National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) consensus codes and standards (available at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)). Local fire departments generally offer life safety inspections at no cost and develop a list of non-compliant items with specific recommendations and timetables for corrective action.

Typical considerations include:

1. Minimum distance from the ceiling (fire code is typically 4 feet clearance) to avoid a "smoke pocket" or above the floor so as to be visible and accessible to a fireman attempting to locate and rescue an unconscious person
2. Materials combustibility: Lofts constructed of typical wood purchased at a home improvement store can be highly combustible. Privacy curtains, if not fire resistant, can also be highly combustible. Lofts are often attached to other combustible materials such as wood paneling.
3. Emergency egress: Ability to get down from the loft (i.e. stairs or ladder) and out in the event of a fire in the dark and with visibility obscured by smoke. Many lofts may not have adequate egress (ladders).
4. Structural capacity (size of structural members and attachment methods) may be inadequate for the combined load of furniture, stored items and people. Attachment methods and locations may be improperly adding stress to the building structure (i.e., roof joists, etc.)
5. Smoke detectors in appropriate locations and with operating batteries

### [RMF Sponsored Loss Control Appraisal program \(2003-2004 school year\):](#)

The RMF is sponsoring appraisals to be conducted by Gallagher Bassett Services, Inc. between November and April at no cost to the chapter or House Corporation for the following chapters. The House Corporation President or another HC officer or qualified alumnus should attend the appraisal at the Chapter House. Since it is a good learning experience, it is suggested that the Chapter Advisor, undergraduate Risk Management Chairman, Consul and House Manager attend as well. Chris Moran, Director of Housing can be contacted at HQ for more information (847-869-3655)

### **Chapter & School**

Delta Tau Westminster College  
Eta Kappa Southwest Missouri State  
Theta Eta University of Missouri- Rolla  
Eta Delta Tennessee Tech University  
Eta Rho University of North Alabama  
Delta Omega University of Tulsa  
Theta Chi Arkansas State University

Delta Eta University of California-Los Angeles  
Epsilon Eta University of California-Fresno  
Epsilon Theta San Jose State University  
Gamma Iota Louisiana State University  
Gamma Kappa Utah State University  
Zeta Tau Fort Hays State University  
Alpha Chi Pennsylvania State University

Epsilon Nu Texas Tech University  
Upsilon Upsilon University of Washington  
Eta Upsilon Texas A&M University

Alpha Lambda University of Wisconsin  
Alpha Omega Stanford University  
Kappa Kappa University of Illinois

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