



# The Sig House

*A Newsletter from the Board of Grand Trustees*

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## Fire Safety Checklist

Keeping the chapter house in livable and fire safe condition is a challenge. The active brothers live an intense existence which directly impacts the condition of the chapter house. Cleaning is often sporadic or inadequate and things mysteriously and anonymously get broken. What's a house corporation to do with this moving target?

**Train and Empower the House Manager.** Active chapter's House Manager is generally responsible to see that maintenance and cleaning assignments are completed and needed repairs are done (if within the House Manager's skillset) or arranged by the house corporation if more complicated. The following Fire Safety Checklist should be performed monthly by the House Manager after he and a house corporation representative have performed an initial joint inspection to ensure that the House Manager understands what to look for. It is recommended that a joint inspection be done quarterly by both the House Manager and house corporation representative as a quality check.

### [Check only items that apply]

#### Entrances & Exits

- Obstructed exit doors
- No crash bars
- Poor/no lighting
- Broken steps
- Unlit/missing exit signs
- Broken door locks

#### Stairs

- Uneven/loose/broken steps
- Low ceiling/overhang
- No self-closing door
- Worn/loose/missing step tread
- Broken/loose/missing hand rails
- Inadequate lighting

#### Sleeping Rooms

- Lack of smoke alarms/detectors

- Inoperative smoke alarms/detectors
- Obstructed exit doors
- Blocked heating units/vents
- Walking/tripping hazards
- Overloaded outlets
- Presence of combustibles (candles)
- Presence of hot plates
- Missing/loose door knobs

#### Kitchen

- No GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) outlets
- Unsanitary conditions
- Missing/greasy exhaust hood
- Greasy/slippery floor
- Overloaded outlets
- Expired inspection certificate
- Unsecured shelving
- Inadequate wiring/electrical cords
- Bare bulb in exhaust hood
- Missing, discharged or expired fire extinguishers
- Ungrounded kitchen appliances

#### Hallways & Corridors

- Inoperable/missing fire alarms
- Missing, discharged or expired fire extinguishers
- Missing/inoperable smoke detectors and alarms
- No posted evacuation map
- Unmarked/unlit exits
- Damaged, blocked or propped-open fire doors
- Obstructed fire alarms
- Uneven/loose floorboards/tiles
- Unsanitary conditions

#### Bathrooms

- No GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) outlets

#### Boiler/Furnace Room

- Cluttered storage
- Damaged pipe insulation
- Presence of flammables
- Inadequate ventilation
- Expired boiler inspection
- No self-closing door
- No fire walls/doors

# Fostering a Culture of Safety and Responsibility

## Risk Management Foundation Provides

- Educational Resources
- Risk Management Services
- Insurance Services
- Guidance for Undergraduates, Chapter Officers, House Corporations, and Alumni Advisors



[www.rmfeeducation.org](http://www.rmfeeducation.org)

*Let Us Help You Today!*

### Utility Room

- Blocked electrical circuit panel
- Overloaded outlets
- Ungrounded appliances
- Cluttered storage
- Missing circuit panel cover
- Unsecured shelves
- Defective/broken ladder
- Unlabeled circuit breakers
- Open flammable liquids

### Exterior

- Loose siding/shingles
- Ungrounded/no cover outlets
- Overgrown vegetation
- Uncontrolled roof access
- Broken window glass
- Inoperable windows
- Damaged fire escapes
- Uneven sidewalks/driveway
- Poor exterior lighting

*From Sigma Chi's Risk Management Foundation IHSV*

## Forever Young

One area of continuing frustration for house corporations is the immaturity and bad judgment that periodically punctuates Active Chapter life. It's the same old story: A Quaestor's failure to collect house bills causes the chapter to

default on rent. Some young brothers manage to pull a stunt that attracts the wrong attention from the police and university. Hazing raises its ugly head. Alcohol takes its toll with lasting and tragic results.

Yet, most of us were in similar shoes as undergrads. We made our share of mistakes as we tried on manhood for size. Like the boys in "Lord of the Flies", many of us made significant life changing decisions for the very first time as undergraduates. Some of us learned from our mistakes while others didn't seem to get it.

"The older I get, the better I was" reflects a common attitude among some Sigma Chi alums. These brothers loudly decry the bad behavior of "kids these days". Time blurs memory of their own undergraduate days when actions and decisions were equally immature.

Sigma Chi always has been, and always will be a training ground for leaders. One of its core purposes is to improve individual performance by teaching standards of truth and excellence. But coming to real understanding of those standards takes patience and maturity.

Young brothers do what they do. Maturity comes from experiences with lasting impressions. When impressions aren't lasting enough, mistakes are repeated until they are. Thankfully, most young brothers are quick studies and don't require near death experiences to understand the way they should go.

Freshmen are particularly vulnerable since this is the time when most are out of the nest for the first time. Last year's high school valedictorian can easily become this year's college dropout when the folks are no longer around. Having an older brother that shows sincere interest can make a lot of difference in keeping these brothers on track. This is where older brothers can help. Getting to know actives and pledges on a personal level helps them to better focus on strengths and weaknesses.

Identifying and encouraging those with strong leadership potential is an important goal for a house corporation. Active chapters with strong leadership will be more successful and make the house corp's job much easier. If older brothers encourage key brothers into leadership positions, many disciplinary

## Sigma Chi Fraternity's



Affordable financing options up to \$250,000 for Sigma Chi house corporations that own chapter houses

- Chapter House Purchase
- Life & Fire Safety Upgrades
- New Construction
- Renovation



Ritual Regalia Loans up to \$5000



For more information, contact Ed Rammrath  
[eramrath@rammrathrealty.com](mailto:eramrath@rammrathrealty.com)  
Phone 832.483.8676

problems can be circumvented.

The house corporation should also encourage leaders and potential leaders to take advantage of the resources offered by Sigma Chi like Leadership Training Workshop (LTW) and Horizons. Since most or all of the expense is covered, house corp only needs to promote the concept and assist with scheduling.

Remember when you walked into your first chapter house as a rushee? It was probably both intimidating and exhilarating. The Sigma Chi experience is a life long journey. It can seem at times that young actives aren't learning much along the way. They can seem forever young and forever dumb. But their reality is not unlike yours. They have hopes and dreams. They respond to a caring and helping hand, the kind that house corporation mentors can provide. [IHSV](#)

### 2018-2019 Annual Report

The Grand Trustees undertook a two year (2017-2019) Alumni Engagement Initiative (AEI) assignment from the Grand Consul. We found Sigma Chi

alums in places that we did not realize and engaged them internationally as well as in the USA and Canada.

House Corporations were provided a resource manual produced two years ago and the added communications with AEI has strengthened many House Corporations.

The Grand Trustees are developing a new concept for House Corporation Officers Training Seminar (HCOTS) which includes both in person and online training.

Risk Management Foundation's (RMF) Constantine Housing Initiative (CHI) is executing 2019 chapter house inspections to improve fire and life safety with loans and insurance premium credits.

Grand Trustees are working closely with RMF education programs and training along with participation at the Province Conferences.

Most Grand Trustees serve on other committees and boards in addition to

their normal duties.

By Grand Trustee Bill Robinson [IHSV](#)

### New Chapter House

House Corporations handle major renovations and construction. Sometimes, there is a purchase involved. Here is an example of a great success story about Western Illinois University - Iota Omicron Chapter from Paul Anast:

The chapter bought the \$1.5 million (2006 construction cost) 10,000 square foot house at 830 N Avery in Macomb, IL for \$225,000 on October 1, 2018. The real estate market in Macomb crashed and the house had sat vacant for five years.

It was the formerly the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity. It has 16 large dorm rooms which can sleep up to 32, 4 floors, formal library, multi-purpose room, kitchen, walk-out basement, patio, elevator, 8 bathrooms (two are full baths with multiple showers/toilets on dorm floors and a house director apartment.

It is a huge upgrade from our former house that was built in 1857 and held together with a prayer. The guys went

from a broken down Chevette to a new Rolls Royce. The alums and undergraduates are extremely excited.

The house still needs to be fully furnished and have some repair done, but everything is EXcellent. Sigma Chi has taken over the WIU campus with "The Place to Be Rushed" slogan. **IHSV**

## 2019 Outstanding House Corporation Awards

Each year, the Board of Grand Trustees honors Sigma Chi house corporations that demonstrate superior business practices in these 15 areas:

1. Minimum of 3 board members
2. Minimum of 2 board meetings a year
3. Have written bylaws.
4. Current with state/province annual reporting requirements.
5. House corp funds are segregated from chapter funds.
6. Have a written rental agreement for each tenant.
7. Charge each tenant a security deposit.
8. Have regular janitorial service.
9. Have and fund a plan for repairing/replacing major building components.
10. Have a fire sprinkler system.
11. Have a property manager.
12. Publish at least 2 newsletters per year.
13. Maintain an alumni database.
14. Maintain a website.
15. Have an active fund raising campaign.

This year, 54 house corporations submitted applications for this prestigious award. The winners listed alphabetically are (drum roll please):

### Gold Award (20-25 POINTS)

Bradley University  
California State University-Fresno  
Central Michigan University  
Clarkson University  
Cornell University  
DePauw University  
East Tennessee State University  
Embry Riddle-Daytona Beach  
Indiana University  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Kansas State University  
Kettering University  
Mississippi State University  
Missouri State University  
North Dakota State University  
Ohio University  
Oklahoma State University  
Penn State University  
Pittsburg State University

Princeton University  
Purdue University  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
San Jose State University  
Southern Methodist University  
Stephen F. Austin University  
Syracuse University  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
The George Washington University  
University of Alabama  
University of Arizona  
University of British Columbia  
University of California-Berkeley  
University of Central Florida  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Illinois  
University of Kansas  
University of Maryland  
University of Memphis  
University of Michigan  
University of Montana  
University of Rhode Island  
University of Southern California  
University of Texas-Arlington  
University of Texas-Austin  
University of Washington  
University of Wyoming

### Blue Award (15-19 POINTS)

Oregon State University  
University of Arkansas  
University of Denver  
University of North Alabama  
University of Rochester  
University of St. Thomas  
University of Tulsa

### Honorable Mention (< 15 POINTS)

Northwestern University

Congratulations to these hard working and effective house corporation volunteers. **IHSV**

## House Corporation Resource Directory

### ARCHITECTURAL & PLANNING SERVICES

**Aynesworth Architects & Consultants** 512.328.2272  
G. Tim Aynesworth tim@aynesworth.com  
PO Box 161434, Austin TX 78716 www.aynesworth.com  
Architectural design and construction management. Texas Registered Architect, Certified by National Council of Architectural Registration Board.

**TreanorHL Greek Life** 678.297.2929  
Mike Hug Mhug@TreanorHL.com  
www.treanorhl.com/design/greek-life Specializing in the design of new and renovated fraternity houses

**Reifsteck Reid & Company Architects** 217.351.4100  
Rod Reid rreid@rr-arch.com  
Chapter house renovation and construction design; collects data, analyzes project requirements, develops cost estimates; assists locating design and construction team members.

### CHAPTER HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

**Pierce Education Properties, L.P.** 619.297.0400  
Matt Maruccia, VP for Acquisitions  
www.PierceEducationProperties.com National developers, buyers, owners and operators of student housing with specific expertise in Greek Housing acquisition, disposition, development, finance, etc.

### CHAPTER HOUSE FINANCING

**Constantine Capital, Inc.** 832.483.8676  
Ed Rammrath erammrath@rammrathrealty.com  
Affordable financing to Sigma Chi house corporations for chapter house purchase, life & safety upgrades, new construction, renovation and loan guaranty

### FINANCIAL & DATABASE MANAGEMENT

**GreekBill, Inc.** www.greekbill.com 800.457.3816  
Web-based billing and financial management service enables billing, collecting, budgeting, reporting, online payment options

**OmegaFi** www.omegafi.com 800.276.6342  
Chapter and alumni management tools to bill and collect dues and rent, manage rosters and records, pay bills and employees and file tax returns.

### FOOD SERVICES

**Campus Cooks** 847.309.1859  
William Reeder wreeder@campuscooks.com  
Comprehensive program: on-site cook plus management of staffing, payroll, food and supply ordering, menu preparation. www.campuscooks.com

### College Chefs

Jordan Wigton jwigton@collegechefs.com 217.369.7267  
www.collegechefs.com We provide trained professional chefs to prepare delicious meals and maintain a spotless kitchen.

### Culinary Consultants Purchasing Services

Stan Faulkner Support@infoccps.com 314.422.3407  
Brian Heider www.infoccps.com 847.566.7533  
National buying program exclusively for fraternity chapters with food programs. Instant cost savings with no major changes to existing food program.

### Gill Grilling 443.822.0264

Brian Gill brian@gillgrilling.com  
www.gillgrilling.com Equipment consultation & purchasing, Nutritional analysis, payroll, custom menus. Serving Maryland, Massachusetts & Alabama.

### Greek Kitchen Management 623.428.0496

Amy Poklinkoski amy@greekkitchenmanagement.com  
www.greekkitchenmanagement.com  
Kitchen management company specializing in staffing, high quality food preparation, food allergy accommodations and exceptional customer service

### FLOORING

**The Carpet Company** 541.484.5373  
Daryl Egbert C 541.517.8820  
daryle@thecarpetcompany.biz www.thecarpetcompany.biz  
All major brands of commercial and residential flooring.

### FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATION

**Affinity Connection** 814.237.0481 ext 131  
Greg Woodman greg@affinityconnection.com  
www.affinityconnection.com Database management, website hosting/management, newsletter production, enewsletters, fundraising assistance, donation processing

### Member Planet 888.298.8845

Patrick Terrian C 310.590.4413  
pterrian@memberplanet.com www.memberplanet.com  
Email newsletters and text messaging, chapter websites, member database, donation sites.

### Pennington & Associates 785.843.1661

Patrick Alderdice palderdice@penningtonco.com  
www.penningtonco.com  
Capital campaign coordination, gift management, alumni relations programs, website development

### Elevate www.elevateims.com 770.903.3987

Bill Paris bparis@elevateims.com C 404.441.9630  
Specializing in capital campaigns and alumni communications.

### HOUSE DIRECTOR SEARCH & SCREENING

**Greek House Resource** 361.450.0818  
greekhs@gmail.com www.greekhouse.net  
Screen, interview and placement for chapter house directors.

### RESERVE STUDY PLANS

**Regensis Reserves** 503.268.1789  
info@regensisreserves.com www.regensisreserves.com  
30 year plans for renovating chapter house components like furniture, roof, carpet, HVAC and more. Indispensable for planning, scheduling and fund raising.

Do you offer a service for Sigma Chi house corporations? Email rich.thompson@sigmachicago.com with the details and get listed in the Service Directory.