

FIRE SAFETY

TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE

- Make sure your housing is protected by facility-wide fire detection and alarm systems. Make sure they are in working order.
- Tenants should conduct a fire drill at least twice a year. Identify the exit for each room.
- Instruct tenants that if the alarm sounds to leave and let the fire department investigate.
- No smoking. Smoking should not be allowed in the chapter facility because it is the leading cause of fires. If it is permitted, ensure there are plenty of large, deep ashtrays.
- Remember to stay with the stove when you are cooking and learn how to smother a small pan fire with a lid and/or fire extinguisher. Do not allow late night cooking.
- No space heaters. Space heaters are a leading cause of fires in fraternity houses.
- Halogen lamps need space. Keep anything that can burn well away from these lights, and turn them off before leaving. Have the appropriate covers for the top of the lamps.

LOFTS IN ROOMS

Lofts are a popular feature in residence halls and chapter houses. There are many concerns for safety about lofts. The alumni and volunteer corporation may also decide not to allow lofts in individual rooms. Because of concerns expressed by sprinkler inspectors, insurance company adjusters, and other fire/safety officials, the following are several suggested guidelines.

Dimensions

The total square footage of the platform surface should not exceed 32 square feet or the size of a standard 4' x 8' sheet of plywood.

Height

The finished platform surface should not be closer than 36 inches from the ceiling.

Attachment

The entire structure should be free-standing and should not be nailed, glued, or bolted into any surface of the room.

Location

The loft should not obstruct the function of the sprinkler head(s) located in the room, and a loft should not obstruct the function of any pathways for egress. In general, a loft should not be positioned directly underneath a sprinkler head and should be positioned against a wall on the opposite side of the room from the sprinkler head location. Lofts should not block doors or windows.

Liability

Sigma Phi Epsilon's property insurance program may not assume any responsibility for injuries or property loss resulting from the construction of any loft. Tenants who choose to build lofts may be held personally liable in the event of loss, injury, or death that can be attributable to the construction of such lofts.

NOTE: *All lofts should be removed at the end of the school year prior to closing the chapter facility. Any damage caused by the presence of a loft in a room, including removal, should be deducted from the tenant's damage deposit.*

BE PREPARED

- Is your chapter facility equipped with working fire detectors/alarms?
- Do you have smoke detectors?
- Are the smoke detectors tested regularly?
- Is the facility equipped with readily accessible fire extinguishers?
- Are they recharged periodically?
- Do the tenants practice fire drills at least twice a year?
- Is your insurance policy reviewed annually and adjusted for inflation?
- Has your property been appraised in the last five years?
- Does your insurance policy provide **replacement** cost of your property?
- Do you have coverage for earthquakes and floods?
- Does your insurance policy name as loss payees all those from whom the chapter has housing loans, including Sigma Phi Epsilon?
- Are chapter members aware that their personal property must be covered by their parents' homeowner's policy?
- Does our facility have a sprinkler system?*

Immediate action should be taken to rectify those areas to which you answer "no." Your local insurance agent, the fire chief, and Sigma Phi Epsilon Headquarters can help.

**Sprinkler systems are becoming a requirements in most states due to several recent tragic campus fires. Consult your local fire chief regarding fire regulations.*