

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT GUIDE

This guide contains information to assist alumni boards in properly managing a facility. The property is the greatest financial asset of the alumni board and must be operation as any commercial property. It must be treated well to ensure that it can be inhabited by many generations of students to come or sold for a good price that will enable the alumni board to purchase an even better facility.

For information regarding the purchase of a facility, please refer to the Sigma Phi Epsilon Housing Guide that can be obtained through Headquarters or accessed at www.sigep.org.

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This guide is not meant to be a comprehensive guide for use at every facility. It is meant to be a model to help alumni boards better manage properties. Special thanks to Pi Kappa Alpha, Delta Tau Delta, the Historic Renovation Corporation at the University of Virginia, and the National Fire Protection Association for sharing their resources in the preparation of this guide.

GETTING STARTED

A chapter house must be operated as any other commercial property and at its best provides a home away from home for students to learn and develop leadership skills throughout their college years. Many chapter houses are currently suffering from deferred maintenance and a lack of savings for future repairs. By managing the property as a business venture, you will ensure that the property is enjoyed for generations to come.

The first steps to follow are:

❑ ***Incorporation***

Make sure the alumni board is incorporated. The property is an asset of the alumni board and the alumni board must be an incorporated entity in the state where the property exists. If the alumni board needs a new set of bylaws, please contact SigEp Headquarters for a set of sample bylaws. Headquarters does not have a copy of each alumni board's bylaws on file.

❑ ***Property Insurance***

Make sure the chapter house has the necessary property insurance. Please call the director of chapter and housing safety at SigEp headquarters for information about the SigEp property insurance program or if you have questions about your current insurance policy.

❑ ***Lease Agreements***

Ensure that every tenant has a signed lease, is current on their rent, and has paid their security deposit. The Vice President of Financial Operations is responsible for this information and collection of dues and rent.

❑ ***Operation Budget***

Review the budget for the current year and begin thinking about the budget for next year. Consider short term-maintenance (paint, carpet, furniture), deferred maintenance (plumbing, electrical, HVAC, roof), and long-term projects (additions, renovations, future building).

❑ ***Full Occupancy***

Ensure that undergraduates fill the house for the upcoming academic year. The critical element to financial stability is ensuring 100% occupancy. The chapter house should not be the easy or inexpensive place to live on campus. Rather, it should be a privilege to live in the house. Work with the Vice President of Financial Operations on this.

❑ ***Taxes & Filing***

Ensure that the alumni board files the necessary tax returns with the IRS on a regular basis.

❑ ***House Rules***

Ensure that the undergraduates understand the house rules. The activities allowed in the house will dictate how the undergraduates treat the property.

HOUSING OPTIONS

RESIDENCE HALLS

Arrange with the university for chapter members to all live in the same residence hall, floor, or wing. Often there is an accompanying lounge that can be reserved for SigEp use. This approach is especially appropriate for young chapters.

UNIVERSITY HOUSES

Many colleges and universities own houses on, or close, to campus that they are willing to sell or lease to fraternities.

GREEK HOUSES

Explore the possibility of purchasing an existing fraternity or sorority house. Contacting the alumni corporation president produces the best results.

APARTMENT BUILDINGS

A building originally constructed for apartments may be converted for fraternity use.

LODGES

Some chapters meet and socialize in a building that sleeps few or no members. All costs are covered by additional dues and parlor fees. This provides the chapter a place to meet.

LEASES

A house or lodge may be leased by the alumni corporation, and in turn, rented to the chapter and its members. Only the alumni board should sign a lease.

BUY & BUILD

Many alumni boards have purchased property and built chapter facilities. This is by far the most difficult option. It requires long-term planning, aggressive savings, and the dedication of significant time and resources.

LOCATION

The correct location of a fraternity house is very important. In fact, it is a major factor in the long-term health and success of the chapter. The primary items to consider are as follows.

HIGH VISIBILITY

Arrange with the university for chapter members to all live in the same residence hall, floor, or wing. Often there is an accompanying lounge that can be reserved for SigEp use. This approach is especially appropriate for young chapters.

GREEK ROW

If there are already a number of fraternities and sororities clustered together, try to location in the same area. Being off the “row” or away from the other chapters can create an obstacle for the chapter. Once the facility is built, overcoming these barriers can be very difficult.

PROXIMITY TO CAMPUS

You should choose a location that is close to campus. This is important for the chapter’s visibility as well as convenience.

NEIGHBORHOOD

Choosing your neighborhood is crucial. If you choose to locate nearby single-family homes and residential neighborhoods, remember the chapter must be a responsible, respectful part of the community. Any behavior to the contrary can create many problems for the chapter and alumni board.

PROPERTY VALUE

Select a location where property values are stable or rising. Do not select a location where property values are falling or where vandalism, theft, or other crimes are likely. The chapter facility should be a safe home away from home.

BUSINESS PLAN

In order to improve your chances of securing a loan, you need a well-planned strategy. When corporations approach banks for loans, they submit a formal business plan. This is advisable for alumni boards, too, because it exhibits that you are well organized, have examined the situation from all angles, and are professional in your approach.

Listed below are possible topics or data to include in a business plan.

- Objectives.**
Reasons for a chapter facility
- Description.**
Square footage of proposed facility, number of rooms, construction type, other building considerations, etc.
- Location.**
Strengths in relation to campus, residence halls, Greek houses, & apartments or housing.
- Kitchen.**
Will a kitchen be part of the plan? Will it produce a profit?
- Competition.**
Other fraternities on campus and their housing situation.
- Comparable Charges.**
What does the competition charge for housing? (Residence halls, apartments, and other Greek housing, etc.)
- Overview of Chapter.**
Date of the chapter's founding, historical manpower information, current size, academic performance, disciplinary history, campus involvement, awards and recognition, etc.
- College/University Enrollment.**
Current and projected enrollment for institution.
- Alumni.**
Total number of alumni, location of alumni base, estimated fundraising campaign, etc.
- Alumni Board.**
Members on the alumni board, occupation, relevant talents, etc.
- Financial Information.**
Projected revenues and expenses, budgets, savings, projected debt service, etc. (This is the most important section to a lender, and very complete information must be included.)
- Support Documents.**
Pictures, architectural drawings, bids, etc.

For more information, consult SigEp's *Housing Guide*. The *Housing Guide* will help you develop the financial information you need as well as help define the scope of the building project. If you need further assistance, contact Jacques Vauclain at SigEp Headquarters by calling (804) 353-1901, extension 327.

PROPERTY INSURANCE

Ensuring that your property is adequately insured is essential. The majority of SigEp's alumni boards have chosen to participate in SigEp's property insurance program. Many alumni boards have received better coverage and a lower premium in this program. For information about how you can participate, contact SigEp Headquarters at (804) 353-1901.

ARE YOU COVERED?

If you have not reviewed your fire insurance in the past few years, you may be underinsured. The house you built for \$500,000 five years ago would cost over \$740,000 to rebuild at today's construction cost. To avoid finding yourself underinsured if you need to file a claim, review and update your insurance coverage annually.

HOW MUCH INSURANCE DO YOU NEED?

Buy enough insurance to cover the cost of replacing the building, including the cost of permanently attached fixtures such as carpets, sinks, hot water heaters, etc. Exclude the value of the land and any foundation or subsurface structure. These items are not covered in a standard property insurance policy. To determine the replacement cost, either hire a professional appraiser or measure the square footage of the building, using outside wall dimensions, and multiply the area by the current construction cost per square foot for similar properties. Check with some local builders for the appropriate building cost per square foot.

When purchasing insurance, keep in mind the terms:

Replacement Cost (RC): Cost of replacing property without deduction for depreciation.

Actual Cash Value (ACV): The replacement cost of property less an allowance for physical depreciation and obsolescence.

DO NOT underinsure. Purchase Replacement Cost insurance. Your insurance contract will require that you insure your building to a specified percentage of its RC. If you carry less insurance than the percentage specified, then you must share in the cost of the loss.

HOW MUCH INSURANCE COVERAGE DO YOU NEED ON CONTENTS?

No matter how much coverage you have, you will not collect the full amount of insurance unless you can establish the value of your property. To do that, conduct an inventory. List the items the alumni board owns, any serial numbers, the approximate purchase dates, and the prices paid.

Your insurance agent can probably give you an inventory form. You might want to photograph or videotape possessions as well. Store the inventory, any appraisals, and pictures or videotapes in a safe place away from the chapter house.

NOTE: Notify the occupants (tenants) that the alumni board's fire insurance does not cover their personal property. Members should be insured through their parents' homeowner's insurance or have their own rental insurance.

SAMPLE HOUSE RULES

An important element in keeping the property in good shape is the undergraduates conduct while in the facility. The following is a list of sample house rules.

- All members are expected to act as gentlemen and live the cardinal principles of virtue, diligence and brotherly love. Respect and care should be shown at all times towards guests and all members. Each member is responsible for the conduct of his guest.
- The house and furnishings will be utilized by the members and their guests in a manner consistent with the purpose for which they were designed.
- No illegal drug use will be permitted on the property. This is grounds for immediate expulsion by the alumni board.
- Articles will not be taken from a room without the owners consent.
- Knock before entering an individuals sleeping quarters.
- Individuals will be charged 150% of the cost to repair damage caused by them to the facility. Damage that is not attributable to an individual shall be billed to all chapter members security deposits.
- Quiet hours will be from 10 p.m. until 8 am Sunday evening through Friday morning. During quiet hours radios and stereos may be played at a level not to be heard outside of that room. Violation of quiet hours will result in a fine determined by the standards committee.
- At any time day or night, any person who is studying may request the volume to be lowered and that request will be honored.
- Eating is permitted in the dining room only. All trash, crumbs, etc. will be cleaned up immediately after eating. All dishes, pots, pans, silverware, etc. will be washed, dried, and put away immediately after eating.
- No one is allowed on the roof. Violation will result in a fine from the standards board and possible expulsion.
- All members will participate in keeping the house clean. Assigned house duties are to be done by Noon on the day they are to be completed. Failure to do so will result in a fine from the standards board.
- Alcoholic beverages are recommended to be banned from the common area at all times. Only people who are 21 or over may consume alcohol on the property and in the privacy of their own room. Alcohol free housing is not a policy in SigEp, however, members must abide by state and local law with regard to the consumption of alcohol.

OPENING THE HOUSE IN THE FALL

The time before student move into the property is important as the appearance of the chapter house will help dictate how the students treat the property. A property that is clean and well-maintained will be treated better by students than a property that already appears in disrepair. The following checklist should be reviewed by the alumni board before undergraduates move in for the fall term. Make sure that the boiler, sprinklers, and all other items that need to be inspected have been. Make sure the certificate of occupancy is in order. And, meet with the executive board and the undergraduate house manager to review the rules for the property.

Your primary duties are to ensure that the property is well managed and well maintained. Following a protocol of procedures will help ensure the smooth operation of the property. The key event that sets the direction for the operation of the facility is opening the house each year. The main task is to organize and schedule the jobs that will be done to open the house. The best way to accomplish these jobs is through the use of checklist.

OPENING THE CHAPTER HOUSE

- Property inspection complete.
- Signed lease agreements are collected for all tenants.
- Signed membership agreements are collected for all tenants.
- Damage deposits are collected for all tenants.
- Keys are on hand for disbursement.
- Meet with all chapter officers to review rules for year.
- House rules and chapter standards are posted.
- Safety rules and emergency procedures are posted.
- All equipment is in working order.
 - HVAC/Boiler is operational.
 - Appliances are operational.
 - Plumbing is operational.
 - Electrical system is operational.
 - Telephones are operational.
- House is clean and ready for occupancy.
- Cleaning supplies are stocked.
- Lights are operational inside.
- Lights are operational outside.
- Grounds maintenance is complete and house is serviced by exterminator.
- Personnel are hired and scheduled. (If applicable)
- All safety equipment is checked and in working order.
 - Exit lights are operational.
 - Fire extinguishers are operational.
 - Sprinkler system is operational.
 - Additional fire suppression system in kitchen is operational. (If applicable)
- Health inspections are complete.
- Fire inspections are complete.
- Summer repairs and projects are complete.

PROPERTY INSPECTION

A complete property inspection should be done at the beginning of the academic year, during the holiday break, and at the end of the academic year. Work to prioritize the list of needed projects and complete them as the alumni board has the funds.

SITE—OVERALL	<i>CONDITION</i>	<i>COMMENTS</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Curbs/Sidewalks	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Parking Areas	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Areas	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Trash containers	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fences/Gates	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Signage	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting (Interior)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting (Exterior)	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleanliness	_____	_____

BUILDING—OVERALL	<i>CONDITION</i>	<i>COMMENTS</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Roofs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gutters	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Windows	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Window screens	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Walls	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Stairs	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hallways	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Balconies	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mailboxes	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> HVAC/Boiler	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Water Heaters	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical system	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Basement	_____	_____

- Ice machine _____
- Fixtures _____
- Plumbing _____
- Fire system/Sprinklers _____
- Fire extinguishers _____

COMMON AREAS

CONDITION COMMENTS

- Doors _____
- Flooring _____
- Walls _____
- Ceilings _____
- Blinds/Drapes _____
- Furniture _____
- Fixtures _____

SECURITY/SAFETY

CONDITION COMMENTS

- Intercom _____
- Burglar Alarm _____
- Locks _____
- Smoke Detectors _____
 - Battery _____
 - Hardwire _____
 - Monitored _____
- Fire Extinguishers _____
- Sprinkler System _____
- Fire Suppression _____
- Fencing _____
- Fire Escapes/Doors _____

AMENITIES

CONDITION

COMMENTS

<input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Rooms	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Washers	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dryers	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise Equipment	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Pool	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Television/VCR	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pool Table	_____	_____

DAMAGE DEPOSITS & ROOM INSPECTIONS

Before each tenant moves into his room, he and the alumni board Vice President of Housing or Inspection Chair should complete the room inspection and Damage Deposit Calculation Sheet.

ROOM DEPOSITS

Each tenant should pay a damage deposit at least equal to one month's rent. The alumni board should determine the amount of the deposit. The damage deposits should be held by the alumni board in a separate account and returned to the tenants over the summer upon final completion of repairs to the facility. Do not return damage deposits at any point during the academic year.

COMMON AREA DEPOSITS

Each undergraduate whether they live in the facility or not should pay a damage deposit in addition to their parlor fee or rent. This damage deposit should be held by the alumni board in the same account with the damage deposits from tenants and should be returned to the members in the summer upon final completion of repairs to the facility.

KEY DEPOSITS

Each tenant should pay a \$20 key deposit. The key to the room must be returned to the alumni board in May for the tenant to receive back his deposit.

INSPECTIONS

The alumni board Vice President of Housing or Inspection Chair and the tenant should inspect the room the tenant will occupy. A report of the initial condition of the facility should be filed with the alumni board and a copy given to the tenant. The room should be inspected again by the tenant and an alumni board member in December before the tenant leaves for the winter and again in May when the tenant moves out of the facility. Any damage that has been done to an individual's room should be repaired by the alumni board and deducted from the tenant's security deposit.

The Vice President of Housing or Inspection Chair and the House Manager for the chapter should inspect all common areas of the facility at the beginning of the academic year. A report should be filed with the alumni board and a copy given to the House Manager. The alumni board should inspect the common areas of the facility in December and again at the end of the school year when the tenants move out of the facility. Any damage that has been done to the property will be repaired and deducted from the common area damage deposits.

Damage deposits are a critical element of the alumni board's financial operations. Too often, alumni board members have to spend some of their long-term maintenance budget on making cosmetic repairs to the facility at the end of the academic year. Proper management of damage deposits will help the alumni board preserve the long-term maintenance budget for the facility.

DAMAGE AND MAINTENANCE POLICIES

The following is a sample damage and maintenance policy to help reduce the amount of abuse that occurs to a facility during the academic year. Remember that the alumni board is dealing with undergraduates mostly between the ages of 18-21. The key to a good damage and maintenance policy is that all costs associated with intentional damage are not taken from long term reserves. They must either be taken from security deposits, paid by the individual who did the damage, or taken from the chapter's events budget.

Intentional Damage

If intentional damage is done to a room or a common area, the first step is to determine who did the damage. If an individual is identified, the person should pay 150% of the cost to repair the damage. The additional 50% is deposited in a scholarship fund for the chapter. All repairs should be made by qualified repairmen and individuals should not be given the opportunity to repair the damage themselves.

If nobody is able to determine who did the damage then the cost is paid in one of three ways. 1) If the damage occurred in an individual's room the individual's security deposit is charged. 2) If the damage occurred to the common area then the general security deposit is charged. 3) If the chapter prefers, 150% of the cost of repair can be taken from the chapter's events budget, however, one of the above payments is preferred.

Long Term Maintenance

When the alumni board makes a major repair to the facility the alumni board should start a reserve fund for the next time that repair must be made. (e.g. if the roof is replaced, the alumni board should start a roof reserve fund by dividing the estimated cost of the next new roof by the expected number of years the roof will last). Given this approach, the alumni board will have the money on hand the next time a project needs to be completed and the alumni board will not have to attempt to raise money or increase the debt on the property. As a guide, many state universities' building and grounds departments keep 10% of rental revenue as a budget for long-term maintenance.

Please contact Headquarters for sample alumni board budgets that will help you budget correctly for needed long-term maintenance.

SAMPLE DAMAGE DEPOSIT – \$300 Monthly Rent

Tenant (Yearly Security Deposit)	Non-Tenant (Yearly Security Deposit)
\$300 Room Deposit	-- (Out of house member)
\$20 Key Deposit	-- (Out of house member)
\$100 Common Area Deposit	\$100 Common Area Deposit
\$420 Total Yearly Security Deposit	\$100 Total Yearly Security Deposit

ASSESSING DAMAGES

Room inspections and damage deposits help prevent damage. These tools provide a method of determining the amount of reimbursement to collect from those who fail to care properly for alumni board property.

If damage occurs during a school term, before a tenant is scheduled to move out, a follow-up inspection should be conducted. The damage should be repaired and the appropriate amount should be taken from the tenant's deposit. The following are some items commonly charged against damage deposits:

- Damage to any part of the chapter house or property
- Replacement of furniture and/or fixtures because of loss or damage
- Paint necessary to return room to original color
- Cost of labor and materials to repair and/or replace anything applicable
- Collection of unpaid rent or dues may be taken from security deposits depending on the Landlord/Tenant act of your particular state and the language contained in the lease agreement.

Careful consideration must be given to the amount of time/labor that will be expended to repair or replace property. Labor cost should be based upon what it would cost to pay a professional to do the work. Be sure to include the time spent on going to the store, etc. to acquire the materials or replacement items. Remember: You get what you pay for, so always hire a professional or skilled person for the job. An aggressive rate charged for time spent will help deter people from doing damage in the first place.

SUMMER OPERATION

The summer provides the alumni board the opportunity to make major repairs to the facility if needed. Unless the alumni board is sure that it can turn a profit over the summer, it is best to leave the property vacant for the summer months.

Do not operate the property during the summer if the alumni board will lose money. Too often, alumni boards attempt to make up for lost revenue during the academic year, or try to put some extra money away during the summer months and the alumni board ends up losing money and incurring additional repair costs.

The chapter facility should operate financially on an eight or nine month basis. The summer months should be viewed as a separate cost center that must operate on its own. Again, the best use of the summer months is to make needed repairs to the facility.

LOFTS IN ROOMS

Lofts are a popular feature in resident halls and chapter houses. There are many concerns for safety about lofts. The alumni board 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.

ROOM INSPECTION & DAMAGE DEPOSIT CALCULATION SHEET

Tenant _____

Parents' Names _____

Permanent Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Room _____ Room Lease Signed? Yes No

Damage Deposit Amount for Current Lease \$ _____

DEPOSIT CALCULATION

Past Deposit Balance Carried Forward \$ _____

Remaining Due for Current Lease \$ _____

Additional Charges \$ _____

Total Balance Due \$ _____

Deposit Paid in Full? Yes No Date Paid _____

ROOM INSPECTION

Initial Inspection

*Follow-up or
Final Inspection*

*Charge for Damage
of Needed Work*

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Walls			
Floor			
Ceiling			
Window(s) & Screen(s)			
Door(s) & Key(s)			
Cleanliness			
Paint			
Light Fixtures			
Plumbing Fixtures			
Furniture			
Other			

Total Charged for Damages, Cleaning, Painting, etc. \$ _____

Deposit as of Follow-up or Final Inspection \$ _____

Amount to Return to or Collect from Tenant \$ _____

Paid Amount in Full? Yes No -or- Amount Has Been Returned? Yes No

Date Alumni Board Signature

Date Tenant Signature

REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

MATERIALS

When making any repairs or improvements to a facility, use only the toughest commercial grade products. Residential grade materials may be less expensive in the short term, however, the alumni board will pay far more in the long term.

CHOOSING A PROFESSIONAL

Before you hire a professional you should give careful consideration to the choice. You have several resources to check when seeking a contractor or other professional services.

Personal Recommendations

Alumni, friends, neighbors, and relatives may all offer an opinion you trust. Be sure to consider those with previous experience hiring a contractor.

Trade Association

The National Association of Home Builders or the Home Remodeler's Association may be a good contact. Membership in these organization, or in the local Chamber of Commerce is usually an indicator of reliability and honesty. Businesses with these contracts typically have roots in the community and are interested in maintaining a positive reputation.

University Housing & Greek Community

The college/university housing department may also have listings of contractors. Such a list tends to have quality professionals from which to choose. If a contracting or service company can retain a recommendation from another alumni board or university official, it will probably serve your purposes well, too.

Dealers & Supply Stores

These companies know all the local contractors and will sometimes be willing to make recommendations. Each dealer will naturally favor his own customers, so compare recommendations from different dealers and select a name that is mentioned several times.

Yellow Pages

The Yellow Pages lists professional services. For a specific topic, look under the appropriate category. Newspapers often carry ads for individuals specializing in home repairs.

Better Business Bureau

The Better Business Bureau may be contacted to check references. This organization usually will not make recommendations, but it can tell you whether or not the names under consideration have any complaints listed against them.

BIDS & CONTRACTS

When the chapter facility requires the work of a professional contractor, you should always make sure to get a written estimate from each contractor. Consider those estimates that detail the costs of the project clearly. This estimate forms the basis for a written contract and written timeline. Once a professional is decided upon, the following factors should be clearly outlined in a final contract signed by both parties.

Plans & Specifications should be attached to and become part of the contract.

- ❑ **Brands & Models** should be predetermined and specified.
- ❑ **Substitutions** should be approved. Approval for “equal” substitutions should be required in the contract. Substitution clauses are a common and they should be considered with caution.
- ❑ **Second Party Involvement** should be mentioned in the contract and the other parties’ roles clearly spelled out, especially if it will be supervising the project. The architectural firm is an example of a second party.
- ❑ **Subcontractors** are the responsibility of the contractor. If there are subcontractors to be hired, make the general contractor responsible for hiring them, paying them, and coordinating their work. Have all this spelled out in the contract.
- ❑ **Dates/Timeline** should be included. Just remember that these are not really very binding in a court of law. The time clause will be much stronger and enforceable if the wording says something like “time is of the essence” or “dates are of the essence of this contract.” The alumni board will need to allow for unavoidable delays, but a completion date gives the alumni board something to fall back on if the contractor is deliberately stalling or leaving for another job before the alumni board is finished.
- ❑ **Insurance Coverage** should be obtained by the contractor before he starts. Request proof of coverage including proof of such an agreement with the subcontractors. This insurance coverage will save the alumni board from being held liable if a worker injures himself while working on the property. Liability insurance should also cover damage to the property.
- ❑ **Cleanliness & Debris Removal** and who will do it should also be clearly defined in the contract. It should also clarify just what “cleaning up” means.
- ❑ **Damage** of lawns, plants, trees, or other shrubbery may occurs when the chapter facility undergoes major repairs. The contract should state who will pay for making the needed restorations or replacements.
- ❑ **Approvals** may be required from the local building department as work progresses. The contract should spell out the contractor’s responsibility for arranging for inspections and getting the necessary approvals by making certain his work conforms to the codes.
- ❑ **Changes** requested by the alumni board, suggested by the contractor, or additions to the original contract should be written down and signed by both parties. This is probably the most frequent cause of disagreement between contractors and homeowners.
- ❑ **Terms of Payment** should be spelled out. For your protection, the alumni board should always be ahead of schedule. That way, if the contractor fails to finish the work, the alumni board will ban a balance in its favor. The terms should be such that the final balance is not due until a reasonable length of time (from 10 to 30 days) after the job is finished. The alumni board needs time to check that the work has been done satisfactorily.
- ❑ **Final Arrangements** need to include an affidavit certifying that payment has been made for all subcontractors and all materials.

MAINTENANCE & CHAPTER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the ultimate responsibility of the alumni board to ensure that the property it owns/manages is properly maintained. Proper maintenance means a sanitary, structurally sound, regularly inspected, safe facility. In addition, a properly maintained chapter facility is one that improves and expands as the chapter grows.

Of course, the undergraduates share responsibility for proper house maintenance. The chapter should be responsible for house cleanliness, and individuals should be responsible for paying any damages for their actions. Many alumni board require a damage deposit from members living in the chapter facility. Alumni boards should also have tenants sign leases and membership agreements holding them responsible for their financial obligations, behavioral responsibilities, and other actions while living in the facility.

The chapter's House Manager is responsible to ensure that members are assigned weekly duties that guarantee the cleanliness of the bathrooms, kitchen, and all common areas inside and outside the facility. These duties should be assigned equally to all members living in the chapter facility. The House manager is also responsible for purchasing and storing house supplies such as toilet paper, cleaning detergents, mops and brooms, etc. The House Manager is a member of the Vice President of Finance's cabinet

HOUSE MANAGER (UNDERGRADUATE)

- Work with the alumni board to ensure the facility meets all health and fire codes.
- Post a "to do" list outlining each members obligation to help keep the facility clean.
- Post a "to fix" list that members can add to easily.
- Coordinate repairs.
- Ensure facility is closed properly for all vacations.
- Charge members who damage property 150% of replacement value.

SAMPLE YEARLY MAINTENANCE

DAILY

- Clean bathroom toilets, sinks, counters, and floors.
- Straighten furniture in common areas.
- Sweep floors in common areas.
- Sweep and mop dining room and kitchen.
- Pick up trash in common areas and outside grounds.
- Restock paper items, soap, and cleaning supplies as needed.

WEEKLY

- Clean windows.
- Sweep and mop all hard floors.
- Vacuum all carpeted floors.
- Scrub shower walls and floors.
- Dust furniture, fixtures, and trophies.
- Mow lawn, trim shrubs, rake leaves as needed.
- Clean dumpster area.
- Replace burned out lights.
- Clean parking area.

MONTHLY

- Clean air filters in heating and cooling systems.
- Wax hard floors.
- Steam clean carpets.
- Trim hedges and landscaping.

SEASONAL—SPRING

- Fertilize lawn.
- Administer insect and weed control.
- Service cooling systems.
- Clean attic.
- Clean drapes.
- Paint exterior.

SEASONAL—FALL

- Service heating systems.
- Sweep fireplace chimney.
- Fill fuel tank.
- Clean gutters.
- Check door and window seals.

CONTACTS DIRECTORY

Using the same vendors or tradesmen on a regular basis is smart if they do a good job. With the amount of regular turnover on the alumni board and in the chapter, it is important to keep this list updated so the alumni board does not re-invent the wheel each time a repair is needed.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Fire Department

Department _____ Contact _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Police Department

Department _____ Contact _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

AGENCIES & DEPARTMENTS

City Inspector

Department _____ Contact _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

College/University Housing

Department _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Health Department

Department _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

UTILITIES

Electric Company

Department _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Gas Company

Department _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Oil Company

Department _____

Contact _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Facsimile (____) _____

E-mail _____

Website _____

Telephone

Department _____

Contact _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Facsimile (____) _____

E-mail _____

Website _____

Water Company

Department _____

Contact _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (____) _____

Facsimile (____) _____

E-mail _____

Website _____

SUPPLIERS, VENDORS & TRADESMEN

Appliances

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Asphalt & Pavement

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Carpeting

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Carpentry

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Concrete

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Electrical Maintenance

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Extermination

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Fire Extinguisher Maintenance

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Fire Alarm Maintenance

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Furniture

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Gas Fired Equipment

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

General Contractor

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Glass Supplier

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Grounds Maintenance

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

HVAC Maintenance

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Painting

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Plumbing

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Roof & Gutters

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Sheet Rocking

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Tile & Grout

Corporation _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone (____) _____
Facsimile (____) _____
E-mail _____
Website _____

Contact _____

Waste Removal

Corporation_____

Contact_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Telephone (____)_____

Facsimile (____)_____

E-mail_____

Website_____

INSURANCE

Insurance Carrier

Corporation_____

Contact_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Telephone (____)_____

Facsimile (____)_____

E-mail_____

Website_____

CLOSING THE HOUSE FOR BREAKS

WINTER BREAK

Alumni boards must take care to close the house properly over the winter break. Several fires have occurred in SigEp chapter houses over the holiday season for a variety of reasons. The following checklist will help ensure that you are taking the necessary precautions to protect the facility over the winter break so that the property is ready for the undergraduates in January.

The heat should be turned down to reduce utility costs, however, the facility must be kept warm enough to ensure that pipes do not freeze. If any tenant has a space heater in the property (space heaters are strongly discouraged as a safety hazard), the heater must be unplugged for the holidays.

SUMMER BREAK

As the school year comes to an end, attention must also be paid to properly closing the chapter house for the summer months. Ideally, the house should be in the same condition it was in when it was opened in the Fall. You can do a lot to ensure that this is the case by staying on top of facility maintenance and repair throughout the year, and by beginning closing procedures at least one month before the doors are to be locked.

All keys should be collected by the alumni board. If a key is not returned, the tenant's key deposit should be kept by the alumni board.

The summer provides the alumni board the opportunity to make major repairs to the facility if needed. Do not operate the property during the summer. The chapter facility should operate financially on a nine month basis. The summer months should be viewed as a separate cost center. Too often alumni boards attempt to make up for lost revenue or put extra money away during the summer months and end up losing money and having additional repairs and maintenance costs. Use these months to make needed repairs.

PROPERTY INSPECTION

The undergraduate House Manager and a representative from the alumni board should walk through the property with a checklist from the beginning of the academic year. Damage to the common areas will be noted and repaired if feasible over the winter break. The cost of the repairs should be deducted from the common area security deposit account.

Each undergraduate should complete an inspection of his room with an alumni board member. Damage should be noted and repaired if feasible over the break. The cost of the repairs will be deducted from the tenant's security deposit.

CLOSING THE CHAPTER HOUSE CHECKLIST

- Signed lease agreements are collected from all returning tenants.
- Ensure that all rooms are completely emptied of possessions and trash by tenants.
- Collect all keys from tenants.
- Contact the post office to have all mail forwarded or held during the summer.
- Discontinue garbage services, vender services, etc.
- Have telephone service terminated or placed on "vacation rates."
- Be sure that working telephones are in locked rooms.
- Have natural gas service disconnected.
- Store and lock all equipment and furniture.
- Store and lock all trophies, composites, photos, awards, and other valuables.
- Disconnect refrigerator. (Consult your service man before doing so to make sure that damage will not occur to the motor.)
- Clean refrigerator and stoves thoroughly, and leave doors open to avoid mildew.
- Empty all trash from the house to eliminate fire and health hazards.
- Make arrangements to have all trash hauled away.
- Shut off all air conditioning units.
- Check all locks on doors and windows.
- Repair any broken windows.
- All accounts receivable should be collected.
- All accounts payable should be paid.
- All safety equipment is checked and in working order.
 - Exit lights are operational.
 - Fire extinguishers are operational.
 - Sprinkler system is operational.
 - Additional fire suppression system in kitchen is operational. (If applicable)
- Complete property inspection. Inventory equipment, furnishings, and amenities.
- Itemize all damage or repairs needed in individual and common areas.
- Return remainder of damage deposit to non-returning tenant.

NOTE: The facility should be closed for winter and summer breaks. Modify this list, and use it as a guide for cleaning and securing the property. Remember: You should have tenants sign nine (9) month leases, so you will not have to deal with returning deposits early or tenants moving.

CHAPTER HOUSE FINANCES

The chapter facility should be operated like any other piece of commercial real estate. It is important that the alumni board operate in a fiscally responsible manner. The following guidelines will help you manage the property in a responsible manner.

MAXIMUM DEBT SERVICE

There should be no more than \$10,000 debt per bed on the property. While this will vary depending on the cost of living in your location, it is a guideline for alumni boards to follow. If the alumni board has more than \$10,000 debt per bed or less than 30% equity in the property, there could be a problem if the alumni board is unable to keep the property full.

FULL OCCUPANCY

Filling the property is a critical element to good financial management. There are several different ways to ensure that the property is full. First and foremost is to have undergraduates sign leases early. Do not let the property become the last resort for people who do not get their first choices of places to live. In some college towns, it is the norm for students to sign housing contracts for the following year in November. Where this is the case, the alumni board must also get leases signed in November. Several alumni boards use lottery systems to fill the empty spaces in the facility and force members to live in the property or be expelled from SigEp. To properly implement this policy, leases must be signed early before those who might be drafted sign leases elsewhere.

MORTGAGES & INTEREST RATES

The alumni board should have a mortgage at a market interest rate for commercial loans in its area of the country. Avoid balloon payments if possible. Alumni boards that have balloon payments only inhibit their ability to build net equity in their property over time. The mortgage should last no longer than 20 years and preferably 15 years as the property will need a major renovation every 15 years to stay current with other campus living options.

SAVINGS

The alumni board must save for long term repairs such as a new roof, enhanced fire safety systems, new carpet, new furniture, etc. (See Vice President of Financial Operations section.) Many universities save over 10% of rental revenue for long term maintenance.

DAMAGE DEPOSITS

As mentioned in an earlier section, it is important that the alumni board handle security deposits in the proper manner to avoid having to spend long term savings on cosmetic repairs each year. See the section entitled "Damage Deposits."

RESIDENT ADVISORS & HOUSEMOTHERS

The involvement of responsible, older adults with SigEp's undergraduates provides valuable support and direction. A resident advisor helps establish a healthy living environment that provides members a "home away from home." While it is not required that a resident advisor be a college graduate, understanding and firsthand knowledge of higher education and of young adults are important. Desirable personal characteristics include being able to keep an active pace, good judgement, tact, patience, a sense of humor, an objective viewpoint, and the ability to be a good listener and to relate with students.

While it should go without saying, when selecting a resident advisor be certain to determine that the candidate is **free of alcohol or other drug dependencies and is in good physical and mental health**. A resident advisor is a role model to chapter members, and an ambassador to the college/university, alumni, parents, and other guests.

GOALS

A resident advisor serves in an advisory capacity, aims to develop a friendly relationship with members, works with the student officers and alumni board, helps plan social programs for alumni and parents, assists with financial management and operation of the chapter's meal plan, and supervises operation of the kitchen, cook, and kitchen assistants.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Well-acquainted with each member of the chapter.
- Serves as a resource to members and refers students to professional support as needed.
- Reports unusual and/or significant behaviors or incidents to the appropriate authorities.
- Encourages development of responsibility, integrity, and decision making.
- Official host of the living group to parents, alumni, and guests.
- Assists with the education and development of etiquette and interpersonal skills.
- Meets individually with staff members of the Greek life office.
- Attends alumni board meetings as requested.
- Attends executive committee meetings as requested.
- Assists during major campus events such as open house, recruitment, parents' weekend, homecoming, alumni events, etc.
- Additional responsibilities as negotiated by the alumni board.

LIVING ARRANGEMENT

Resident advisors are required to live in the chapter facility. The resident advisor's living quarters generally include a small sitting room, bedroom, and bath. Most are located away from the main house traffic.

TERM OF SERVICE

The term of service is for one academic year, renewable annually. A resident advisor should not accept or be granted a position unless planning to remain for the entire ten-month period as negotiated with the alumni board.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The position is for a ten-month period (usually August 15 to May 15). Salaries are established by each group in terms of specific responsibilities and may vary considerably. (\$4,000-\$7,500 was the average compensation for housemothers on many campuses.) Compensation, which includes room and board, should be consistent with current minimum wage standards. Taxes on room and board are not required. Specific duties and terms of the agreement are specified in each individual contract, signed between the resident advisor and the alumni board.

Note: Resident advisors in graduate school are generally not given a salary. Typically, salaried resident advisors are housemothers. Resident advisors in graduate school may be appointed as a Resident Scholar by Sigma Phi Epsilon Headquarters and receive a stipend from the Sigma Phi Epsilon Educational Foundation.

RESIDENT SCHOLARS

Resident Scholars are graduate students who serve as a resident advisor with a chapter. These graduate students typically receive free room and board from the Alumni Board in addition to a graduate studies scholarship from the Sigma Phi Epsilon Educational Foundation in return for their work with a chapter. If you are interested in learning more about the Resident Scholar Program, please refer to the "Roles" section of this guide or contact Headquarters for additional details.

SAMPLE CONTRACT

Date _____

This contract is between _____ (Alumni Board) and _____ (Resident Advisor).

Period of Employment: From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____

Vacation Dates: Thanksgiving... From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____
Christmas..... From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____
Spring Break... From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____

REMUNERATION: (Check where appropriate)

- Room and board, laundry, occasional meals for guests, other benefits as listed below, plus a salary of \$_____ per month based upon a work-week of _____ hours.
- The salary shall be paid on the _____ day of each month following date of employment for ten months.
- Federal and State withholding taxes shall be deducted from salary as required.
- The Alumni Board shall deduct the Resident Advisor's share of Social Security (FICA) from the monetary salary based upon the total value of the Resident Advisor's compensation.
- The Alumni Board shall provide workman's compensation insurance (SAIF) for the Resident Advisor.
- The Alumni Board shall pay unemployment tax.
- Other: (Specify and see appendix) _____

Note: Board will not be provided during college vacation periods; however, room facilities will be available by arrangement with the alumni board.

TERMINATION OF CONTRACT:

Termination of this appointment shall be effective upon the approval of the Alumni Board. Either party upon thirty (30) days notice to the other party may terminate with or without cause this contract. (See "Conduct & Dress" for additional termination clauses.)

RESPONSIBILITIES: (Check where appropriate)

- Maintain a relationship with the chapter that will promote a healthy living environment.
- Encourage responsible conduct in the chapter, foster an awareness of college/university regulations, assist in developing standards for the living environment for the chapter facility, and work in cooperation with the chapter officers and alumni board.
- Understand the risk management policies of the college/university and of Sigma Phi Epsilon. Be familiar with the "Statement on Chapter & Individual Responsibility."
- Encourage and stimulate the leadership of the chapter officers and chapter members.
- Encourage and promote academic achievement.
- In case of incident, report such cases to the proper authorities including the alumni board, college/university, and Sigma Phi Epsilon Headquarters immediately.
- Be aware of the financial operation of the chapter and the physical condition of the facility. Bring substandard conditions that may endanger the health or safety of members and guest to the attention of the alumni board and college/university immediately.
- Serve as a liaison between the chapter, alumni board, alumni and parents.
- Plan and organize the chapter's meal plan.
- Assume responsibility for the purchase of supplies and provisions.
- Supervise the cook and the operation of the kitchen.
- Employ and supervise kitchen helpers and dining room attendants.
- Supervise cleaning of the kitchen and chapter facility.
- Assist in the development and implementation of etiquette training for all members.
- Assist and advise in the planning and implementation of activities for alumni and parents.
- Assist with maintenance of chapter facility, equipment, and furnishings.
- Conduct fire, health, and safety inspections.
- Other: _____

Resident Advisor

Alumni Board President

Alumni Board Vice President of Operations

CONTRACT APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL REMUNERATION:

- Telephone.
- Tickets to athletic events.
- Tickets to campus concerts.
- Newspaper.
- Cable or satellite television.
- Operating cost for automobile.
- Use of apartment during summer and/or other vacation periods.
- Remuneration of expenses if requested to be away from living group for special periods such as Ritual activities.
- Other: _____

CONDUCT & DRESS

For the considerations to be received and subject to the terms stated, the Resident Advisor shall observe the following requirements:

- Dress and personal appearance shall be neat and clean.
- Kitchen and house rules, as determined by the chapter and alumni board, shall be posted and observed.
- Resident Advisor shall abide by Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Statement on Chapter and Individual Responsibility."
- Abuse of alcohol or other drugs shall be grounds for immediate termination of employment without notice.
- Offensive conduct, refusal to perform duties satisfactorily, or refusal to obey rules shall be grounds for immediate termination of employment.

MISCELLANEOUS

An inventory of all furnishings and other items in the Resident Advisor's apartment should be taken and signed when the individual moves in or out of the chapter facility.

COOKS

Developing a meal plan is a good way to help create a positive chapter environment. Members eating together is a sign of chapter quality. The following are sample guidelines only—each alumni board will have its own specific requirements and duties. These should be clarified at time of hiring. Typically, the resident advisor is responsible for the supervising cook.

REQUIREMENTS

- Skill and experience in quantity cookery.
- An acceptance of position on a salary basis, not an hourly basis.
- Availability to prepare meals for additional functions, special events, etc.
- Maintain a neat and clean appearance. Wear a hair-cover and uniform at work.
- Present a food handler's health certificate.
- Operate the chapter's meal plan Monday through Friday (breakfast, lunch, and dinner).

DUTIES

- Prepare planned meals alone except when an assistant is assigned this duty.
- Breakfasts and lunches prepared alone.
- Dinners and special occasions prepared with assistants.
- Daily number of servings per meal varies with the size of the chapter.
- Monday evening, formal dinner.
- Special occasions—recruitment, alumni functions, parents weekend, etc.
- Supervises serving of food.
- Care of food supplies and left-overs.
- Advises resident advisor to quantity of food needed
- Develops menu suggestions for meal planning.
- Makes salads.
- Prepares vegetables.
- Prepares main entrées.
- Prepares desserts.
- Checks and stores groceries that are delivered each day.
- Checks delivery of kitchen laundry and cleaning supplies.
- Defrost and cleans refrigerator once a week.

Pay is determined by each alumni board, but generally cooks are paid \$375-\$650 per month, with an average of \$575.

CONDUCT & DRESS

For the considerations to be received and subject to the terms stated, the cook shall observe the following requirements:

- Dress and personal appearance shall be neat and clean.
- Kitchen and house rules, as determined by the chapter and alumni board, shall be posted and observed.
- Cook shall abide by Sigma Phi Epsilon's "Statement on Chapter and Individual Responsibility."
- Abuse of alcohol or other drugs shall be grounds for immediate termination of employment without notice.
- Offensive conduct, refusal to perform duties satisfactorily, or refusal to obey rules shall be grounds for immediate termination of employment.

MISCELLANEOUS

An inventory of all equipment and furnishings and other items in the kitchen apartment should be taken and signed when the begins working in the chapter facility.

PROFESSIONAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Several alumni boards have discovered that hiring a professional property management company can help increase the appearance of the facility, control the amount of deferred maintenance on the property and give the alumni board the opportunity to focus on mentoring the undergraduates rather than fixing toilets.

POSITIVES

- The property manager is usually responsible for collecting all rent, security deposits, and parlor fees from the members taking the burden off of the alumni board.
- The property manager often knows the qualified repair people in town who will do a job correctly and at a reasonable price.
- The property manager will be responsible for the late evening phone calls from undergraduates if the plumbing has a problem, etc.
- Property managers can help alumni boards budget properly for long term maintenance such as roof replacement, etc.

NEGATIVES

- Property management companies cost money. Property management companies usually cost in the range of 3-5% of the gross rent each year. This can be paid by either increasing the rent to each member by this amount or cutting back in other areas. **In the long term, the property manager will save the alumni board money.**

To contact a professional property manager in your area, consult the yellow pages, ask others who own commercial real estate, or talk with the facilities department at the University to ask if they have any recommendations. If you are able to convince the alumni board of another fraternity to hire the same property manager it may help you to defray some of the costs.

Contact Headquarters for more information or ask in your local area for reputable property management firms.

SAFETY TIPS

FIRE

- Keep fire extinguishers filled and in their proper locations.
- Keep furnace room clean and free of flammable materials.
- Have HVAC system checked before each season.
- Use fireplace screens.

ELECTRICAL

- Repair any exposed wiring or damaged fixtures.
- Do not overload outlets.
- Know where the fuse or breaker box is located.

NATURAL GAS

- Only allow professionals to move any natural gas equipment.
- If doing yard work and digging, locate natural gas lines.

PLUMBING

- Insulate pipes or keep them above freezing in winter by leaving a faucet dripping.
- Leave plumbing areas open so heat can circulate around pipes.
- Turn water off and empty the water line when you plan to be gone from the facility for an extended period of time, such as winter break.
- Know where the water main is located.

WEATHER

- Be aware of and educate the members of emergency procedures in case of tornado, hurricane, blizzard, earthquake, flood, etc.
- Conduct occasional emergency drills for the chapter.

SECURITY

- Keep windows locked at night and when members are away.
- Keep exterior doors locked at all times.
- Install timers on outdoor and selected indoor lights.
- Enlist the help of an alumnus to periodically check the facility during breaks.

FIRE SAFETY

TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE

- Make sure your housing is protected by facility-wide fire detection and alarm systems. Mark 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.
- Remember to extinguish candles/incense before leaving the room and place them well away from anything combustible.

BE PREPARED

- | <i>Yes</i> | <i>No</i> | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your chapter facility equipped with working fire detectors/alarms? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have smoke detectors? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the smoke detectors tested regularly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the facility equipped with readily accessible fire extinguishers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are they recharged periodically? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the tenants practice fire drills at least twice a year? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your insurance policy reviewed annually and adjusted for inflation? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your property been appraised in the last five years? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your insurance policy provide replacement cost of your property? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have coverage for earthquakes and floods? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your insurance policy name as loss payees all those from whom the chapter has housing loans, including Sigma Phi Epsilon ? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are chapter members aware that their personal property must be covered by their parents' homeowner's policies? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your facility have 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 requirement in most states due to several recent tragic campus fires. Consult your local fire chief regarding fire regulations.