OPERATING A CHAPTER HOUSING FACILITY

OPENING THE HOUSE IN THE FALL

The time before members 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 members than a property that already appears in disrepair. In addition, many parents and family members will be forming a first impression of the Fraternity based on the condition of the facility during move-in.

The primary duties of a House Corporation are to ensure that the property is well managed and well maintained. The following checklist should be reviewed by the House Corporation before undergraduates move in for the fall term. Meet with the Prudential Board and the undergraduate House Manager to review the rules for the property and this checklist.

OPENING THE CHAPTER HOUSE

- Property inspection complete.
- Signed lease agreements are collected for all tenants.
- Damage deposits are collected for all tenants.
- Keys are on hand for disbursement.
- Meet with Prudential Board to review rules for year and conduct a house walkthrough.
- House Rules and chapter standards are posted, as well as distributed to all members.
- 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, including the kitchen and all restrooms.
- Cleaning supplies are stocked.
- Lights are operational inside.
- Lights are operational outside.
- Grounds maintenance is complete and house is serviced by an 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.
- All residents complete room check-in form.
FALL & WINTER PREPARATION
- Service heating system.
- Change furnace filters.
- If required, oil bearings to the boiler pump system.
- Make sure to disconnect all watering/garden hoses from the outside spigots drain and store.
- Shut off all exterior water supplies, if possible.
- Clean gutters and roof drains of leaves and trash.
- Make sure all down spouts have splash guards or other devices to project the water away from the building.
- Have ample supplies of ice melt for use on walks, steps and parking lot as needed.
- Clean summer equipment, change oil as required, and place in storage for next spring. Lawn mowers and gasoline can’t be stored in the building!
- Drain in-ground sprinkler systems where applicable.
- All timers for common lighting should be adjusted for fall/winter operation.
- Laundry dryer vents should be thoroughly cleaned.
- Install storm windows.
- Check door and window seals – repair as needed.

SPRING PREPARATION
- Service air-conditioning system.
- Paint chapter house exterior – as appropriate.
- Administer insect and weed control.
- Fertilize lawn.
- Prepare lawn equipment for lawn care responsibilities.
- Change furnace filters.
- All timers for common lighting should be adjusted for spring operation.
- Laundry vents should be thoroughly cleaned.
- Check door and window seals – repair as needed.
- Prepare/install window screens.
- Inspect roof.
- Clean drapes and carpets.
- Clean and store snow removal equipment.
- Clean attic.

SUMMER OPERATION
The summer provides the House Corporation the opportunity to make major repairs to the facility if needed. Unless the Corporation 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 House Corporation will lose money. Too often, Corporations attempt to make up for lost revenue during the academic year or try to put some extra money away during the summer months and they end 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.