



Beginning of the Year Tips

The early part of the fall season should be a busy time for your house corporation team. Starting the year off with strong communications should hopefully pay dividends through the remainder of the year.

Here are some items that we encourage House Corporations to do as the academic year begins:

- Schedule a meeting with the chapter officers and house manager.
Getting the house corporation and the chapter officers on the same page regarding expectations and operating procedures is very important. This is a great time to remind everyone about safety and operating procedures and discuss how to report maintenance issues/concerns. Also, this will be an opportunity to share with the chapter leaders what the house corporations short term plans are for maintenance, repairs and renovations.

- Schedule a time in the first 30 days from the start of the semester to meet with the entire chapter. This will give the House Corporation a face with the entire chapter and provide an opportunity for the House Corporation to share its plans for maintenance, repairs and renovations. This is also an important opportunity for the House Corporation to share its expectation that the chapter follow pertinent Fraternity laws and policies, particularly as it relates to chapter house safety.
Remind members to verify whether they have insurance coverage for their personal property via their parent's homeowner's policy or if they need a separate renter's policy. The House Corporation's property & casualty coverage typically does not include personal property.

- If you haven't already conducted a walk-through of the house, now is the time. Consider the following:
 - Inspect all rooms/suites, document damage and make repairs so incoming brothers have a great experience
 - Complete routine maintenance on furnace/boiler/AC
 - Clean and inspect all roof drains and gutters (contact a local professional for this service)
 - Repair all broken windows and doors to prevent damage or security issues
 - Were doors rekeyed/lock codes changed?
 - Have a roofing contractor inspect the roof, provide a written recommendation and repair any immediate concerns
 - Contact emergency service company to conduct an inspection and service emergency lighting, alarm equipment, fire suppression and sprinkler systems
 - Clean exterior and interior of chapter house, trim bushes back from windows and doors for safety, check that security cameras and safety lighting are working properly
 - Clean/service fireplace and chimney and check for defects or debris

- Inspect the hot water heater and exposed water lines and drain pipes for slow leaks
 - Remove and dispose of trash or other debris outside the facility, especially near the dumpster
 - Service and clean stoves, ovens, hood ranges and other kitchen equipment
 - Take note of obvious need repairs/damage
 - Watch for inappropriate storage of items
 - Take note of all safety equipment and insure they appear to be in operating order (first aid kit, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, sprinkler head covers)
- Update Emergency Contact sheets.
We recommend sending this to all the chapter officers, your house director and house manager and additionally, this should be posted in your boiler room and in a few other prominent locations so that “any” brother would see have access to this. There is a [sample form](#) in the House Corporation Manual to help you get started.
 - Schedule a fire drill (unannounced) within the first 30 days of the semester
 - Review other best practices and the House Corporation Manual for timely activities