"FRATERNITY FIRE"

"For your well-being, please locate and practice finding your nearest exit and route to safety". This caring admonition is placed in hotels and motels across our country.

My visits to Philadelphia's University of Pennsylvania campus often takes me past the Alumni Centre in the middle of the campus. There is still evidence that the attractive, classic building that was once the Delt shelter on campus, was the scene of a fatal fraternity fire. This fire wiped out lives and the chapter from that campus. (I am happy to report that the Delts are back at the University of Pennsylvania).

My background as a volunteer firefighter and airline pilot has given me great respect for fire and flash over, the explosion that often occurs with residential fires caused by extreme heat. Briefly, I am going to share some suggestions to reduce the risk of fire in your shelter:

1) No open flames - ever! No indoor barbecues. Remember, candles and incense sticks smolder.

2) Blocked exits and hallways and third floors with only one exit are dangerous. $65 will purchase an American LaFrance metal escape ladder to be used with a window to give a second way out.

3) Linseed oil will ignite by itself 100% of the time if stored outside a sealed metal container. Any linseed oil product should be properly disposed of and never kept in your paint locker.

4) Fire extinguishers, alarms, smoke detectors and heat sensors must be checked monthly and signed off. Never play with fire extinguishers as a prank.

5) Kitchen hood vents and fans must have annual professional cleaning, de-greasing and be signed off.

6) Do not overload electrical circuits with stereos, computers, refrigerators, microwaves, electric heaters, etc. Assuming all circuits are always properly fused is often wishful thinking.

7) Fix and clean the following: exit lights, signs, interior cleanliness, exterior debris stacked against the structure. Cooperate with your fire department!

8) Cigarettes thrown from windows will burn your house down!

Well, brother Delts, I have covered some areas to look into. We at the fire departments, notice 5% of the population have most of the trouble because so many of the aforementioned areas are not taken care of! It can't happen to me is an unrealistic attitude to have.

Best wishes in this important area of campus life.

Fraternally,

Denny Brawford
Western Pacific Division President
Housing Commission

P.S. By copying this and posting in several areas in the shelter, we can get the word out to the brothers. Thanks!