

# The Daily Tar Heel

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## Greeks' fire safety improving

### CHI PSI TOPS LIST OF FIRE CODE VIOLATIONS WITH 20 INFRACTIONS

BY ALLISON PARKER  
STAFF WRITER

After more than 230 fire violations were given to Greek houses in the fall, officials from the Chapel Hill Fire Department said the violations have decreased this semester.

Chapel Hill Fire Captain John Parker said there have only been 102 violations given out so far this semester.

Fraternities with a high number of violations include Chi Psi with 20, Sigma Phi Epsilon with 19, and Alpha Epsilon Pi with 18.

Fifteen of the violations received by

Sigma Phi Epsilon were found in the house's bedrooms.

"Our house was one of the first inspected, and they went into each bedroom," said Ryan Hodges, Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter president.

He said that fire marshals did not inspect bedrooms at the other houses.

But Hodges said although some of the violations seem minor, they can lead to positive change.

"They are very picky with the violations, but they keep people on their toes," he said.

These violations include material

blocking hallways, excess trash and holes in the wall, and burned out light bulbs.

"Fire code violations can be not checking to make sure the fire extinguishers are up to pressure, there are obstructions in hallways, or if the windows don't open," said Walker Rutherford, president of the Interfraternity Council.

Rutherford said fraternity officials are aware of the danger fire presents but noted keeping up to code is expensive.

"It's been a huge financial burden on fraternities to meet code regulations," he said.

Rutherford said the Greek community has made a concerted effort to drastically improve fire safety following the 1996 fire at the Phi Gamma Delta house that killed five people.

"Fire safety in our houses are some of

the best in the nation, partially as a response to the tragic fire," he said.

Each semester, fire training sessions are held by fire marshals to inform fraternity presidents about violations.

"We go over basic safety measures, along with the common mistakes and problems," said Jay Anhorn, director of Greek Affairs at the University.

During the training, a mock inspection is held in each fraternity house.

"We'll walk through the house and basically point out things we're looking for," Anhorn said.

He added that in order for the houses to be cleared of charges, they must get their violations down to zero.

"If the violations aren't cleared, the

SEE VIOLATIONS, PAGE 2

## Morehead project to produce obstacles

### Renovations will force astronomy labs to move

BY WILL AREY  
STAFF WRITER

Renovations to the Morehead Planetarium, tentatively scheduled to begin in January 2006, will close the building for approximately 14 months, impacting both the community and many of the University's astronomy lab sections.

Holden Thorp, the planetarium's director, said the upgrades will dramatically change the look of the the planetarium's interior, most notably the building's entrance areas.

"One of the main things in the addition will be a basement for schoolchildren to utilize between activities," Thorp said.

This new area also will give children a place to gather on cold or rainy days, Thorp said.

But the renovations could also create a problem for students in the University's astronomy lab classes, which utilize the planetarium.

Wayne Christiansen, a professor in the department of physics and astronomy, said that the department will have to devise a way to relocate the lab sections and the 200 to 400 students who take the labs each semester.

"The planetarium is an important part of the astronomy lab curriculum," Christiansen said, noting that six of the 11 astronomy labs each semester are conducted in the planetarium.

He said labs are held in the planetarium twice a week with approximately 150 students in each section.

"We'll probably run more labs during the daytime hours, which will require more teaching assistants," he said. "The real challenge is going to be dealing with the number of students."

Christiansen said he hopes the planetarium can remain open to astronomy students during the renovations. "It may very well be that the planetarium could be open for students during lab sections to accommodate them," he said.

Despite the possibility of lab relocations, Christiansen professed support for the project.

"It's important that this project goes through, and we'll just try and find a way to accommodate it," he said.

Thorp also said he hopes the planetarium can stay open at least temporarily to accommodate some of the astronomy classes.

"Maybe there will be a creative way we can keep it open part of the time," Thorp said. "But it's not going to work very well to have students in the planetarium with someone operating a jackhammer right outside."

Thorp said officials still are formulating plans for the remodeling project.

"We have no idea what it's going to look like at this point," Thorp said, reiterating that all designs are tentative.

A number of ideas and drawings will be considered before the project gets under way, he said.

The project should not affect the parking lots surrounding the planetarium, Thorp said.

"Right now, I don't think parking will be impacted at all," Thorp said. "The plans as of right now don't go past the sidewalks around the planetarium."

Thorp also said he does not anticipate any disagreements between the University and the town about the planned renovations.

"The main point of all this is to drive people downtown," he said.

"The front of the planetarium is in many ways the front door of the University."

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

## Local shops consider changes

BY ERIN GIBSON  
STAFF WRITER

Missy Julian-Fox's downtown clothing store has been in her family since 1942.

When her father owned the store, he sold sport coats for all the home football games. She remembers, as a student, wearing pumps and dresses to cheer on her Heels.

But now people go in jeans and T-shirts, so she has had to adapt to the change in patronage.

"Downtown has always changed and evolved," said Julian-Fox, owner of Julian's at 140 E. Franklin St. and a member of the Chapel Hill Downtown Commission. "People grew up embracing the change."

Local business owners, town leaders and University officials made another change last week as they began planning a new collaborative organization to help downtown development.

Plans for the entity have not been finalized by the Downtown Steering Committee, but it likely will receive input from the business community, the town and the University as it attempts to revitalize the area.

"This is a University town and I think they should help," said Mildred Council, owner of Mama Dip's Kitchen at 408 W. Rosemary St. "I just don't want the University to overpower the businesses."

Council wants it to be known that UNC is a big part of the town, but is not all Chapel Hill has to offer.

Business owners hope the new commission can help increase business through alliances and collaborative efforts. They also hope for additional parking downtown to increase accessibility.

Nancy Hogg, owner of The Cat Shack at 128 E. Franklin St., thinks more street fairs and events to draw people to the downtown area will help increase business.

She also hopes the commission can make downtown more affordable. "I'm not sure I could expand if I wanted to because of the high rent," Hogg said.

Many stores are fighting to make rent and stay in business. Owners are doing all they can to promote their businesses, but often to no avail.

Daniel Johnson, sales associate at VisArt Video at 225 S. Elliot Road, said unless business picks up, the owners will not be renewing their lease in August.

"We can't get the business we need to make the rent," he said. "This will be another empty building downtown."

Julian-Fox said the new committee will be in charge of finding ways to change downtown without compromising its spirit.

"We have to pay attention to the essence of it all with the great mix of businesses we have."

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).



DTH/JOHN DUDLEY

Tom Bushey, of Clarksville, Va., fills up at Walker's BP on the corner of Estes Drive and Franklin Street. Gas prices are on the rise, and travelers this Spring Break should expect extremely high prices. In North Carolina, gas prices are averaging about \$1.632 per gallon.

## TRAVELERS FACE HIGH GAS PRICES

### High demand, crude oil prices could affect Spring Break plans

BY MARGAUX ESCUTIN  
STAFF WRITER

With gas prices and the volume of travelers on the rise, students on Spring Break might experience road blocks on the way to vacation.

Those traveling by motor vehicle to Spring Break locales will run into "extremely high gas prices, that's the trend," said Sarah Davis, spokeswoman for AAA Carolinas.

In North Carolina, gas now averages about \$1.632 per gallon, two-tenths of a cent away from the record of \$1.634.

The high prices could affect Spring Break travel, Davis said. When gas prices

get higher, people reconsider vacation plans and tend to stay closer to home, though it's uncertain whether college students will do the same.

Many factors are responsible for setting a trend for inflated gas costs.

"Mainly, the price of crude oil is extremely high, and retailers have to pass that on to consumers," Davis said.

With the price of a barrel of crude oil at \$36 per barrel, Davis said, the cost of gas likely will be high for the rest of the year.

She added that high demand is to blame for the high prices.

"This is happening at a time when the global economy is picking up, meaning

that there will be a higher demand."

Davis suggested that those traveling by car should not worry about using off-brand gasoline because all gas must meet the same federal standards. She also said that commuters should make sure that rented cars do not require premium gasoline.

In Chapel Hill, the price of gas ranges from \$1.659 for regular at Etna Self Serve to \$1.93 for premium at Walker's BP Service. Both stations are located on East Franklin Street.

At Oak Hollow Texaco, located on N.C. 54, gas runs from \$1.69 for regular to

SEE SPRING BREAK, PAGE 2

## Durham Target aims to serve Triangle residents

BY SARA LEWKOWICZ  
STAFF WRITER

The highly anticipated opening of a new Super Target has Triangle residents excited at the prospect of a more convenient, wallet-friendly shopping experience.

The giant complex, which sells everything from groceries to sporting goods to lingerie, opened its doors Wednesday morning, but the grand opening will be held Sunday.

The grand opening will include a fast pitch machine donated by the Durham Bulls, musical performances by students from the Durham School of the Arts and a storewide sale.

Shaun Hall, an executive team leader at Target, said business has

been booming since the store opened, superceding projected numbers.

"We've had a phenomenal opening so far," he said.

Hall, who said working at Target helped put him through N.C. Agricultural & Technical University, said store managers hope to bring a positive influence to the Triangle.

Store employees participate in Read Across America, a program that brings adults into schools to read to children. Hall said Target will be an ideal place for college students to work part time.

"I worked at Target while attending N.C. A&T, went to an internship, graduated school and

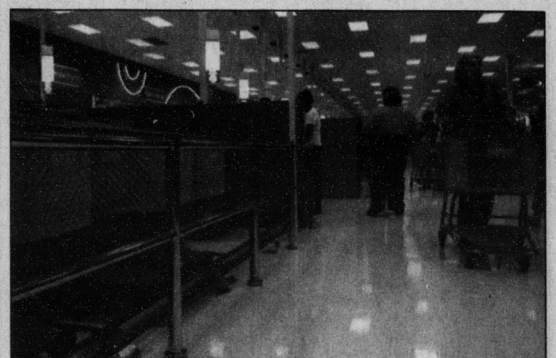
was offered a job as a store executive," he said. "It's a wonderful company to work for and a wonderful place to shop."

Employees at some businesses near the new Target, such as Pier 1 Imports, said they anticipated an influx of customers from the new superstore.

But some employees said they already had seen diminishing sales. Chan Hall, a sales associate for Radio Shack, said business "has been pretty slow" since Target's opening.

"It's pretty much taken all of our business," she said. "That's to be expected because of all the hoopla

SEE TARGET, PAGE 2



DTH/WASHLEY PITT

Durham resident Ellen Johnston-Hale shops in the new Super Target at the old site of South Square Mall. It is a third larger than most Targets.

### ONLINE

- ECU starts program to combat teacher shortage.
- Pulitzer-prize winning artist Art Spiegelman to talk about the evolution of comics at Duke on Friday.



# Happy Spring Break!



### WEATHER

TODAY Partly cloudy, H 79, L 63  
SATURDAY Few showers, H 72, L 39  
SUNDAY Partly cloudy, H 63, L 37

