“Consecrating the Bonds of Obedience”

One of the most famous scenes in *Animal House* is Kevin Bacon’s character being hazed to “consecrate the bonds of obedience.” It’s a funny scene, but it’s a movie. Real life hazing is no laughing matter:

- **Hazing is a crime.** Hazing is not just a matter you can be sued over, it can lead to jail. Judges may laugh at the movie, but they rarely laugh when pronouncing a jail sentence. *Permitting* hazing can also be a legal issue.

- **Hazing violates your chapter and national rules.** Check the rules—it’s there.

- **Insurance has exclusions.** As a general rule, insurance policies do not cover “intentional acts,” they cover “accidents.” Hazing is often specifically excluded. So, if you are sued, insurance may not cover you.

- **Hazing is a violation of university rules.** No one wants to get suspended or expelled from college. Mom and dad won’t find that too funny.

- **Someone is watching.** Hazing is easy to report, with campus hotlines and deans’ open doors. Moreover, social media and camera phones make it easier to publicize and prove hazing. Once reported, do not expect it to remain secret. Lawyers also notice these things.

- **The media love hazing stories.** Don’t believe it? Just Google. Hazing articles have recently been in the New York Times, Rolling Stone, and the AP wire. Schools have included those as far south as Florida A&M and as far north as Dartmouth, with many more in between.

- **Hazing does not help.** Kevin Bacon’s character was still a jerk, and Neidermeyer was killed by his own troops. No one wants to be those guys.

*Animal House* is fine for laughs, but it is no way to run a fraternity or sorority.

**Resources for Hazing Prevention:**

- [www.hazing.cornell.edu](http://www.hazing.cornell.edu)
- [www.hazingprevention.org](http://www.hazingprevention.org)
- [www.stophazing.org](http://www.stophazing.org)
- University Deans’ & Greek Affairs’ offices