

Peace, guards cited for drop in dorm damage

By Jim Fullerton

Damage costs in UNL residence halls have dropped considerably over the past four or five years, according to Joseph Zannini, UNL assistant director of housing in charge of maintenance and operations.

He said possible factors in the damage decrease include the end of the war in Vietnam and the recent use of student security guards.

During the war in Vietnam, a lot of males who normally would not attend college enrolled at UNL to avoid the draft, Zannini said.

"There is now a more subdued, responsible group of students in the dorms," he said.

Capt. Kenneth Markle, assistant director of Campus Police, said he thinks student security has decreased vandalism by 75%. The security guards which lock and patrol the residence halls at night, have only really started to work efficiently this year, he said.

Zannini explained residence hall damage figures would be misleading if he revealed them for publication.

"Distinguishing accidental from intentional damage is usually impossible," he said.

He used the example of a hall resident leaving the water running in a bathroom sink. After the water overflows, covers the floor and causes the tiles to loosen, should the damage be attributed to carelessness or intentional vandalism?

"Every dollar that is spent (for repairs) is student money," he said. "Whenever repairs are made, everyone in

that dorm pays for part of it through their housing fees.

"I can only bill individual people whom I have substantial evidence against or who admit doing the damage," he said.

"We really try to be as fair as we possibly can, but the students' general attitude is that we're fair to the kids we don't charge and unfair to the ones we do charge."

Zannini said about \$20,000 is spent each year on elevator maintenance.

"Elevators and students don't go together. We do our best to keep them running, but there are lots of problems with them," he said.

"Suppose a bunch of guys are leaving for a football or basketball game. There's always some guy who will forget something in his room, right? Naturally, his friends hold the elevator while the guy runs back to get what he forgot.

"Meanwhile, guys on other floors kick and pound on the elevator door while they wait, and somehow these gentle love taps tend to cause a malfunction in the elevator."

Theft is another factor in repair costs. "Kids are always making off with souvenirs," he said.

Last semester in the Abel-Sandoz newsletter, an appeal was made for residents to quit stealing exit signs placed in the halls.

According to housing regulations, residents are not to remove the screens from the windows in their rooms.

Zannini gave reasons why. "Once they're off they get bent, ripped and kicked around, the room, intentionally or not."

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