To: IMC Tenants, Working Groups and Key Holders

From: Gary Storm, Chair, IMC Building/Facilities Committee

Re: Fire, Safety and Security Concerns

Hello everyone:

The IMC Board is pleased to announce that Dean Carr has been hired as the IMC’s Operations Director. He replaces Carol Ammons in this position; his office is on the first floor next to the radio station and his telephone number is 217-344-8820. Dean will be in the building during regularly scheduled hours, getting to know all of you who rent space and/or use the building frequently and responding to any questions or concerns you might have. He is approachable, a good communicator and will be a reliable resource for all. His weekly schedule is:

 Monday and Wednesday: 8-12:00 Noon

 Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday: 12:00 Noon to 8:30 p.m.

As chair of the IMC’s Building/Facilities Committee, I am currently working closely with Dean to address concerns relating to fire, safety and security. Several issues were identified during our most recent inspection by the Urbana Fire Department; others have surfaced around unauthorized individuals loitering in the building and engaging in inappropriate or disruptive activities.

Regarding the Fire Department inspection, three primary concerns were identified:

 1. Misuse of wiring, extension cords and connectors of various kinds

 2. Storage of cardboard, lumber and other materials in inappropriate locations in the building (e.g., under stair wells, in corridors, on top of heating pipes/ducts)

 3. Disruption of possible escape paths during fire or other emergencies by furniture and other items--both inside rented spaces and in public corridors

**The Fire Department requires that the specific list of violations identified during the inspection be corrected by Monday, January 20, 2014. Dean will contact renters of rooms with identified problems no later than Friday, January 10. Anyone who wants to claim and move to an appropriate location items in categories “2” and “3” above, please do so before next Monday, January 13, otherwise Russell Barnes, IMC maintenance director, and/or volunteers will haul them away for disposal.**

Extension cords *per se* are not prohibited, but they must be of an appropriate gauge to perform the function intended and should be unplugged when not in use. The same applies to any connectors used to attach them to outlets and, occasionally, to one another. Further, extension cords should not be strung over pipes or other heat sources or in areas where people can trip over or get caught in them.

While most of these fire and safety concerns can be corrected by the individuals responsible for them, all of us should be watchful for problems of these kinds within the common areas of the IMC and “pitch-in” to help address them. We will all be safer if we make an effort to keep the building organized and in good shape. Also, please feel comfortable to approach Dean or me about possible upgrades to the building, electrical or otherwise, that will make it more functional and/or safe.

Regarding security concerns, there have been several recent instances of people not authorized to be in the building loitering, using alcohol or marijuana, painting graffiti on the walls and, in one case, being noisy and disruptive to renters or others using the building appropriately. It has often been difficult to determine how these individuals gained access to the building, but we can all be vigilant to address this problem as follows:

 Key holders. It is critical that all key holders ensure that doors are locked behind them when they enter the building and locked again when they leave. The IMC Board and staff are reviewing procedures used to issue and reclaim keys and making an effort to retrieve keys from individuals no longer eligible to have them.

 Open hours sponsored by Working Groups, individual IMC members or others renting space in the building. Please examine your procedures for monitoring who comes in and out of the building and “tighten-up” your security measures. If you have questions about how this can accomplished more effectively, please contact Dean or me to help problem solve.

The IMC Board has recently removed the computers on the first floor that had been available for general public use. Other measures being considered are locking the red entrance doors in the front lobby and installing a buzzer system for visitors to contact Dean in his office, changing selective locks, and introducing security cameras or alarm systems. We welcome your input on these matters.

Before closing, you should all know that in the interest of safety, efforts are being made to improve lighting both inside and outside the building. Recent upgrades of overhead lighting inside the building have helped in this regard, but more remains to be done to improve lighting around the perimeter of the building, especially near entrances and exits. The Building/Facilities Committee is exploring roles that the City can play to improve outdoor lighting, but the Board will take action in this area regardless of City participation by the end January.

Finally, I want to invite all of you to consider serving on the IMC Building/Facilities Committee. The committee plans to meet at 5:15 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month and more frequently when needed. Please make an effort to meet Dean if you have not done so already. Thanks for your attention to all of these matters.