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GARAGE DOOR SAFETY TIPS

What about a Garage Door in poor working order?

Broken Springs flying through the air and cracking windows? Who needs that!

The cost of adding or updating your garage door can vary in price depending on your city and the extent of the job, but the return on investment will be worth it.

Making sure your garage door is in good working order is critical to your family's safety.

A garage door is a very large, very heavy, moving object that you and many of those you love must walk or drive beneath several times a day. Making sure this door is in good working order and not about to fall and crush you is critical. There are other possible dangers, too. We don't mean to scare you—most people don't get hurt by their own garage doors. But some people do.

TIPS on how to prevent Garage Door Accidents:

- 1. Test the garage door safety features** - Garage doors have their own, automatic safety features. Your job is to make sure these features are in working order. The safety sensors shine an invisible beam across the opening about six inches from the ground. If anything—your pet tortoise, perhaps—interrupts that beam while the door is closing, the sensor signals the door to go back up again. Test the sensor by interrupting the beam with a broom. Auto-reverse also makes the door go back up again but is triggered by the door hitting something it shouldn't. Test the auto-reverse by letting the door close on a roll of paper towels. If either test fails to make the door reverse (without crushing the towels) call in a professional.
- 2. Inspect the door and its mechanism monthly** - Look at the entire mechanism—springs, cables, rollers and pulleys—for signs of damage or wear, or for any problems in function. If any of these structures were to fail, the door could fall on someone. If you do find a problem, call a professional.
- 3. Don't play with the door** - Little kids are light enough to ride the garage door as it rises by hanging on to the door handle—it's a lot of fun until something goes wrong and a kid gets hurt or killed. Other kids (and not a few adults) like to trigger the door to close and then run out under it—it's a fun challenge unless someone loses the race the same day the auto-reverse fails. Basically, don't play with garage doors and teach your kids not to play with them, either. Hide the remote from small children and mount the wall control out of their reach. And if you absolutely must know if you could race the door and win, have a friend time you with a stop-watch while the door stays put.
- 4. Don't get your fingers pinched** - A lot of fingers get pinched every year between garage door sections. Keep your fingers away from these joints and teach children to do the same. If you are buying a new door, consider a model that has pinch protection.
- 5. Open OR closed for garage door safety** - Leave the door fully open or completely closed, not partially open. It's hard to predict which way a half-open door will move when it is reactivated and could close on something (if the safety features also choose that moment to not work well).
- 6. Fix broken windows** - Broken windows present a security concern, a loss of energy efficiency for your home, and a direct safety hazard, as someone could get cut by the glass. Even a window that is merely cracked should be fixed at once since a cracked window could shatter at any time.

Remember, if your garage door needs repair or more than the most basic maintenance, call a professional. Improperly done DIY repairs could create a lot more safety problems than they solve.

