

Clippings are brief summaries of recent news stories in the consumer media. They offer insights to the latest trends and issues for the door business.

## Garage Door: "America's Favorite Entryway"

Source: Jim Gorman, "All About Garage Doors," *This Old House* magazine, February 2011.

Gorman begins this magazine feature story by saying, "Move over, front door, the garage door has become America's favorite entryway." After describing the rise of the importance of the garage door and the "design revolution" of carriage house doors, he adds three more quotable quotes for our industry.

"Move over, front door, the garage door has become America's favorite entryway."

1. He says the garage door now occupies "a prominent chunk of prime visual real estate."
2. "Yet, for many years garage doors remained stuck in the Dodge Dart era, just blank slabs of stamped steel or painted plywood."
3. "It's an upgrade you'll appreciate with every click of that remote."

*Editor's Note: It's gratifying when writers realize the powerful impact of upgraded garage doors and then communicate those distinctions to their audience. Are you doing the same?*

## Garage Door Repair Gouging Hits Phoenix ... Again

Source: LiAna Gonzales, "Mesa man says he was grossly overcharged for garage repair," *KTVK-TV*, Phoenix, Ariz., Nov. 15, 2012.

This TV news report tells the sad story of Robert Martin, an older man who lives in a retirement community in Mesa, Ariz. After his garage door spring failed, he says that Anytime Garage Doors quoted a new spring and a new opener between \$800 and \$900.

Martin thought it was high, but allowed Anytime to proceed. The final bill shocked him: \$1,180.33. Martin later found out that other companies charge half that. He says that Anytime wouldn't adjust the bill.

This is the second time this year that KTVK's investigative reporter has profiled Anytime and its pricing practices. The Better Business Bureau has also received numerous complaints about Anytime's excessive fees.

*Editor's Note: We have frequently reported about these problems in the Phoenix area. Could these problem companies be preying upon the area's retiree population?*

## Overcharging in Calgary

Source: Tony Tighe, "Calgary couple says garage door repair cost them big bucks," *Global Calgary*, April 13, 2012.

Here we go again. A garage door repair company charges an elderly man \$800 to replace two springs and two drums (why drums?). The man later learns that competitors charge less than half that.

The door company refuses to return any money, and the local TV station then broadcasts the story.

In this case, the offending door technician is Mark Wiebe, who is reported to operate under as many as 13 company names with 27 BBB complaints and an 'F' rating.

*Editor's Note: In many such cases, the consumer's only friend is the news media. Honest garage door companies can simply show the news story to customers, send them a link to the TV video, or post the link on their websites.*

## Bad Garage Door Maintenance Blamed in Near-Death

Source: Sam Cooper, "Garage door that nearly crushed worker to death ... not properly maintained: WorkSafe B.C.," *The Province*, Vancouver, B.C., Oct. 13, 2012.

Failure to properly maintain several large old garage doors has been blamed as the cause of an accident that injured two workers, according

to WorkSafe B.C., a governmental job-safety agency in British Columbia.

The accident occurred on Sept. 10 at the Manitoba Works Yard in Vancouver when a garage door cable snapped and the door crashed down. One worker was struck, while another was pinned to the ground, "knocked unconscious, left bloody, and is lucky to be alive."

The city says 25 of the large overhead doors were installed 46 years ago and have now been put out of service. An investigation found that the doors "were unsafe, not regularly

inspected, and not maintained up to the manufacturer's instructions."

*Editor's Note: This story supports our industry's ongoing contention that garage doors must be properly maintained. Cite this story the next time you attempt to sell a maintenance contract to a commercial client.*

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## Police: How to Prevent Garage Door Break-Ins

Source: Lindsey Hickman, "Thieves are breaking into garages in town; Dixon police want you to know these tips," Dixon Patch, Dixon, Calif., Aug. 27, 2012.

A recent spike in burglaries caused Dixon police to issue a warning. They say burglars gain entry through the garage door by sliding a coat hanger between the top of the top section and the door trim. They then hook the emergency release cord and disengage the operator. It takes only 10 seconds and they're in, leaving little break-in evidence behind.

Dixon police suggest a couple of ways to block access to the cord, such as attaching a thin piece of wood to the opener arm, acting as a shield. Photos of their ideas are posted with this online story.

*Editor's Note: We reported about this break-in method in our spring 2003 issue. It's rarely used, but it clearly demonstrates a vulnerability. Perhaps the Dixon police have a good idea that can be improved by our industry's top garage door and opener engineers.*

## GDO Remotes Used in Theft Rampages

Source: Brian Caldwell, "Teen spree targeted garage door openers, luxury cars," The Record, Waterloo, Ontario, June 12, 2012.

We continue to read frequently about burglars getting into houses by stealing the GDO remote controls from cars parked outside. This story, though, takes the cake.

Operating between midnight and 5 a.m., a 16-year-old thief used the GDO remote method to rack up perhaps as many as 140 counts of theft. Among his conquests were a Porsche, a Jaguar, a BMW, and a Suzuki motorcycle.

It took 90 minutes just to read the charges and facts of the crimes. The thief was sentenced to 35 months, the longest youth sentence ever proposed by the prosecutor.

A 16-year-old thief used the GDO remote method to rack up perhaps as many as 140 counts of theft.

Source: Jeremy Gorner, "Man accused of being one-man crime wave in Lincoln Park," Chicago Tribune, June 5, 2012.

In this high-profile arrest, authorities recovered more than 50

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GDO remote controls, many with the home's address on the back of them. Prosecutors say "Kevin" Liu was a "virtual one-man crime wave" suspected in hundreds of burglaries and thefts in the affluent Lincoln Park neighborhood.

Besides the radio controls, authorities recovered more than \$1 million in merchandise, including 200 bicycles, 200 strollers, 100 golf

clubs, TV sets, jewelry, and laptop computers.

*Editor's Note: "Theft by GDO remote" is widespread and common. Door dealers and manufacturers can be heroes by educating customers about how to prevent this problem (e.g., lock your cars, keep visor remotes hidden, use mini remotes, don't keep your home address in your car, etc.).*

## Photo-Eye Height Cited in Death

Source: "State cites 9 employers for workplace deaths," (Minneapolis) Star Tribune, March 10, 2012.

The Minnesota OSHA slapped a \$25,900 fine on a bus company after one of its owners died in a March 2011 garage door accident. Stephen J. Peterson, 51, was reportedly found pinned under a garage door and asphyxiated by the door's pressure on his chest.

The story says, "The door's safety sensor, meant to stop it from closing on buses, was located 7 feet from the floor."

The Barnesville Bus Company was cited, among other things, for failing to have garage doors with "safeguards to prevent entrapment of employees."

*Editor's Note: An official explained that, if the eyes were mounted lower and a bus was parked in the doorway, a door could "come down on an expensive bus." As we all should know, residential photo-eyes must be mounted no higher than six inches off the ground. The same safety principle applies to commercial doors.*