

# Additional Lessons From the Lawsuits

## DASMA EXPERTS OFFER EXTRA ADVICE

The “Multi-Million-Dollar Lawsuits” stories in our winter issue attracted a flood of interest from installing dealers and manufacturers of our industry. Some commercial operator experts from the DASMA Operator & Electronics Division offer the following additional comments and lessons learned from the lawsuits. We thank them for their input.

### 1 Follow lockout/tagout procedures.

Although the Indianapolis door technician may have followed OSHA’s lockout/tagout procedures, it’s clear that the injured electrician did not. When working on or near motor-controlled doors and gates, always lockout the electrical supply. If the Indianapolis electrician had done so, the accident would not have happened.

### 2 When installing control wiring (bell wire), follow your building code requirements.

Our story noted the importance of using insulated staples instead of bare metal staples. Your local building code may require the wires to be installed

in conduit. Check with the authority having jurisdiction to make sure your installation is compliant with all regulations.

### 3 When servicing an automated door or gate, check any entrapment protection devices.

If the automated door or gate has entrapment protection, check it to make sure it’s operating properly. Then, note that check on your documentation of the service call. Even though this wouldn’t have affected the Indiana or New Jersey lawsuits, this can provide additional liability protection for you.

### 4 Clutches provide protection to the equipment.

Our story said that “Making an appropriate clutch or force adjustment is a primary safety measure for all openers.” However, commercial clutches are primarily intended to provide protection for the *equipment*. Commercial clutches are not intended to provide safety or entrapment protection for people. Other

devices, such as edges and photo eyes, address this need.

If entrapment protection devices are not already installed, recommend to the owner that these devices are required on newer operators and should be installed. If the customer refuses the device, note the refusal on the service documentation.

Clutch adjustment on commercial openers is very different from force adjustment on residential openers. Unlike clutch adjustment on commercial operators, force adjustment on residential openers is defined by UL as a primary safety device for entrapment protection. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions when making clutch adjustments for commercial operators, and always keep safety in mind.

As we noted in our “Lessons From the Lawsuits” story, these tips do not cover all possible safety or liability issues related to servicing garage doors and openers. But reviewing these lessons can be useful for your next meeting with your technicians. ■

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