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Garage Door Issues Garage Door Solutions!

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The following is an abbreviated extract relating specifically and only to Garage Doors from the "City of Toronto" By-Laws:

Authority: Planning and Transportation Committee Report No. 9 Clause No. 6
adopted as amended, by City of Toronto Council on October 3, 4 and 5 2000
Enacted by Council: October 5, 2000

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. 930-2000

The Property Standards By-Law

WHEREAS the official plans of the former area municipalities of the City of Toronto are in effect and include provisions relating to property conditions; and

WHEREAS under section 15.1(3) of the *Building Code Act*, 1992, Council may pass a by-law:

- a) prescribing standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property within the City and for prohibiting the occupancy or use of such property that does not conform with the standards; and
- b) requiring property that does not conform with the standards to be repaired and maintained to conform with the standards or the site to be cleared of all building, structures, debris or refuse and left in a graded or level condition.

21. Exterior openings, doors, windows and skylights.

A. Exterior openings.

- 1) All exterior openings for doors and windows shall be fitted with doors or windows that are maintained in a weather tight condition to prevent drafts or leakage and protected by suitable materials to prevent the entry of rodents, vermin and insects.

- 3) **All exterior doors**, windows, skylights and basement hatchways, including storm and screen doors and storm windows, **shall be maintained in good repair and free from defects and missing components.**

41. Garage doors; exit doors.

A Garage Door is like a “Moving Wall!”

A. If a garage door allows for vehicular ingress or egress from a parking or storage area, and is equipped with an automatic closing mechanism, the garage door shall be equipped with a sensing device that does not allow the door to close when any person, animal or object is crossing it’s path.

After reading these extracted By-Laws, relating to the Garage Door Industry, we trust that you will note the following critical and important issues, **especially Safety and Preventive Maintenance.** We also note that although we have used the “City of Toronto” By-Laws, other cities have similar By-Laws.

Celebrating 49 years in the industry, we will highlight some Garage Door Issues and provide Solutions for your Asset Management.

Unlike the front door of the high-rise Condominium or Townhouse, the garage door has a status, for some, of “out of sight, out of mind!”, until something goes wrong and the door gets stuck!! Then, a reactive process begins with anxious drivers and unit owners demanding service “yesterday”!!!

A worthy analogy of garage doors is teeth which also reside “out of sight and out of mind” until the sound of the dentist’s drill! Teeth require regular brushing, cleaning and preventive maintenance because of regular eating of foods, sugars, acids, etc. that cause plaque, decay, wear and tear.

Garage doors also require adjusting, lubricating and checking with pro-active Preventive Maintenance in order to ensure safety standards, long life expectancy and reduced repairs.

Garage Door Systems

The **Garage Door**, sometimes referred to as the “Overhead Door”, is called the “face” as we see it and is usually made of wood or steel sections: “**Flushwood**” – interior polystyrene used as an insulator with wood on both exterior sides, “**Commercial Plywood**” – comprised of wood only with panels to create a basic design across the sections and, more popular today, “**Insulated Steel**” which is made of insulated interior and steel exteriors on both sides. Because of the manufacturer’s strengthening of the door “face” and parts, as well as timely replacement availability, the “**Insulated Steel**” door is growing in demand. Factory baked-on-enamel paint which eliminates time and cost for maintenance of regular painting of wood finish doors also seems to be a reason to change to “**Insulated Steel**” Garage Doors.

The **Garage Door** consists of a **complex group of systems** that must work in synchronization with each other. Some of the more common systems are:

- a) **Electric Operator/Opener Systems** – Trolley type for condo’s
- b) **Safety Systems** – Photo Eye Sensors, Bottom Section Safety Edges, (Featheredge/ Miller edge), Loop Detector Systems, Air Hoses and Motion Detectors
- c) **Access Control Entry/Exit Devices** – Keys, Cards, Fobs, Receivers with Remotes/Transmitters, Air Hoses (run-over), and Loop Detector Systems (wires embedded under concrete or paving)
- d) **Door Hardware**
 - i. **Torsion Springs or counterweight Systems** – the “muscles” of the garage door are the torsion springs or counterweight systems including steel Shafts, Bearing plates and Drums. When a spring breaks, it is recommended that you replace all of the springs (sometimes 2, 3 or 4, unless recently replaced) to prevent the same problem in a week or two. Changing springs at the same time will save the condo. extra labour costs.
 - ii. **Cables** – a very common wear and tear item since they are the “arms” of the door carrying hundreds of pounds at each opening/closing cycle. Early detection of fraying cables before they break reduces a ripple effect of damage to other door hardware.
 - iii. **Rollers** – high-cycle Garage Doors should have sealed bearing rollers which ensure longer life.
 - iv. **Hinges** – End hinges should be extra strength 11 gauge.
 - v. **Tracks** – 2” or 3” depending on available headroom, size of doors and high cycle usage. The tracks, for condo. sites, are in Standard or Low Headroom Lift based on available headroom.

The Electric Operator/Opener System

The **Electric Operator/Opener Systems** are available in mechanical and logic/circuit board systems with different voltages and horsepowers. It is the “brain” or initiator that starts the process of opening and closing and is not, as many think, the “muscle” that opens and closes the door. The “muscles”, as mentioned earlier, are the springs or counterweight system.

Vital parts of the Electric Operator/Opener System include the Timer which allows the door to stay open for a designated time period (an average time of 30 seconds is recommended subject to the demographics and security requirements of the condo site). For sites that have security gatehouses and controlled entry, “7-day” and “Skip-a-day” Timers can be installed for busy traffic times in the morning and evening, therefore, markedly reducing wear and tear on all parts.

A Delay-on-Reverse feature allows the door to stop momentarily, for one second, when interrupted in the closing cycle thus preventing unnecessary jolting which causes wear and tear of door hardware and electric opener parts.

Safety Systems

A Garage Door is like a “Moving Wall!”

The **Safety Systems**, (as itemized above), of the Garage Door consist of sensors and components that allow for the safe opening/closing operation of very heavy doors. Your door supplier should implore that you ensure these systems are checked on a regular basis to prevent accidents, vehicle/door damage and, moreover, human injuries.

Preventive Maintenance

To safeguard the proper functioning of Garage Door Systems, it is strongly recommended and advised that you **introduce a Preventive Maintenance Program (P.M.P.)** that will;

- Reduce downtime and inconvenience to unit owners
- Reduce unexpected breakdowns
- Reduce costs
- Provide peace of mind (a self serving consideration that reduces stress)

You should expect Comprehensive Written Reports on your P.M.P. itemizing each mechanical and electrical component, access and safety system. These reports should be signed by a professional technician thus providing accountability from your door supplier. This document serves as a crucial “health report” of your Garage Door System.

The specific details include the manner in which the door is accessed, the length of time a door stays open, the location of the safety devices as well as the date of the most recent written Preventive Maintenance Check-list.

Deficiencies should be brought to your early attention for your information, input, repair or replacement. Early detection of worn parts reduces the likelihood and ripple effect of other parts being worn.

“The more you know about what’s wrong, the more you can make it right!”

Strong Case for a Preventive Maintenance Program (P.M.P.)

We report a Small Claims Court Case experienced by one of our condo. clients where the judge ruled against the condo. and awarded the plaintiff (\$7,400), the unit owner and “tailgater”, because the condo. did **not** have a current Preventive Maintenance Program! even though it was acknowledged that the unit owner did **not** use his remote!!

We recommend an updated news bulletin or memo to all residents which advises how, when, where and why to use remotes/transmitters, keys, cards or fobs to enter the garages.

Hot Tip for Unit Owners:

Drivers should allow the garage door to close or start closing before pressing the remote button. First, this definitely ensures that their remote battery is working. If it is not working the door will not open and they will know immediately that they need a new battery. This precaution will also reduce the likelihood of their vehicle hitting the garage door when the door is in the closing cycle.

24/7 Service

Of course, 24/7 service should be available from your door supplier.

Townhouse Garage Doors

Some **Townhouse Garage Doors** are old One-Piece doors that are obsolete and parts are not available and some are Sectional doors which run on vertical and horizontal tracks. If your townhouse complex has old One-Piece doors, there are many solutions to upgrade the property image and value. Sectional garage doors available today are insulated steel providing insulation as well as rigidity to resist major puck and ball dents from hockey/soccer playing in the driveway.

While the new Sectional garage doors are insulated steel they also have a natural wood grain look.

Patterns and styles are available in a variety of colours including the latest popular Coach and Carriage style doors.

Boards of Directors are looking to not only maintain property values but to enhance property values at every opportunity.

Understanding and knowledge of how your **Garage Door System** works (number of vehicles/cycles, wear and tear items) will help you micro-manage this asset, assist in your budgeting and provide indicators as to when items should be replaced thus important information for your Reserve Fund Study.

In summary, the purpose of a **Preventive Maintenance Program (P.M.P.)** is to establish an ongoing schedule of information designed to economically maintain and prolong the

life expectancy and continuous **Safety** of your **Garage Door System** and it's components.

If you follow these guidelines, you will promote and ensure **Safety** and **Preventive Maintenance** according to professional property management standards.

If you require any further information or clarification of Garage Door Systems, please contact the writer at (905) 508-6277, (416) 225-1600 or roy@doddsdoors.com

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