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GARAGE DOOR SAFETY TIPS

Your garage door should provide many years of safe operation if it is installed, operated, and maintained properly. Here are some helpful safety tips.

NOTE: This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of every safety precaution. Consult Cunningham Overhead Door & Windows or the instruction manual for safety information about your door model.

WARNING: Garage door springs, bottom brackets, red colored fasteners, cables and supports are under extreme tension, and can cause serious injury or death.

- 1 **Replace Old Springs.** Your garage door's springs are arguably the most important and most dangerous part of your door. Springs wear out. When they break, injury can result. If you have an older garage door, have your springs inspected by a trained door systems technician and replaced if needed. If your door has two springs, have both replaced even if one is not broken. This will not only prevent any damage caused by the breaking of the second spring, but also keep your door working efficiently.
- 2 **Check Your Door Cables.** Visually inspect the cables that attach the spring system to the bottom brackets on both sides of the door. If these cables are frayed or worn, they are at risk of breaking, which can create a potentially hazardous situation. Due to the hazards associated with high spring tension, these cables should be replaced only by a trained door systems technician.
- 3 **Squeaky Springs?** Springs can squeak and be noisy. This is caused by normal use and does not necessarily indicate a problem. Before calling a trained door systems technician, coat the springs with a spray-on lubricant recommended especially for garage doors. Make sure you put cardboard behind the springs so the lubricant does not get on the walls. Using too much lubricant or too viscous lubricant may drip on the floor creating slippery conditions. If the noise persists, call a trained door systems technician for service.
- 4 **A Do-It-Yourselfer, Eh?** Most consumers choose to have their doors installed by trained door systems technicians. These professionals are trained in the challenging and time consuming task of door installation, and have tools and background to install your door properly.

- 5 **Containment Cables for Extension Springs.** If your garage door has extension springs, the kind that stretch along the horizontal tracks, a containment cable should run through each spring and should be connected to the wall or ceiling at each end. When your garage door is closed, extension springs are under high tension. If a spring breaks, a potentially hazardous situation can result. A containment cable can keep that broken spring contained. If you have extension springs but do not have containment cables, call Cunningham Overhead Door & Windows for a safety inspection.
- 6 **Struggling With Your Door?** If your door does not go up and down smoothly and easily, you may have an unsafe condition. Even older door systems should operate smoothly and easily. If this operational difficulty continues when the door is manually operated, you may have a spring system that is out of balance. This can cause premature wear, especially on the electric opener and cause early failure in other door components. Repairing or replacing spring systems can be hazardous, and should be accomplished only by trained door systems technicians.
- 7 **Watch Your Fingers!** Most doors do not have pinch-resistant joints. Even if your door has a motor operator, the door must occasionally be operated manually at least during power outages. Never place your fingers between the door sections. Lift handles can be added on the inside and outside of the door if you need gripping points. Also, we offer battery back-up electric openers that work in the event of a power failure.
- 8 **Don't Touch the Bottom Brackets!** Since the bottom corner brackets on a garage door are connected to the door's cables, these brackets are constantly under extreme tension. The bottom brackets should only be removed by a trained technician.
- 9 **Use the Old Track?** When buying a replacement garage door, some homeowners are tempted to save a few dollars by putting the new door on the old track. However, your old track may not fit with your new door, depending on the thickness of your new door sections, the weight of the door, the headroom required, the location of the garage door operator, and other considerations. The track and sections work together as a system. For maximum performance and longer life, you should use the track that is designed and supplied for your specific door.
- 10 **Regular Service.** Your garage door is probably the largest, heaviest moving object in your home and is typically used every day. Over time, parts can wear out and break, creating potential hazards. Although you should conduct monthly safety checks and provide regular limited maintenance to your garage door system, an annual visit from a trained door systems technician can keep your door operating safely and smoothly for a long time.
- 11 **Man the Manual.** Keep the owner's manuals for your door and operator near the door for easy reference. Every model of door and operator has specific safety instructions unique to that model. Where is *your* manual? For a replacement copy, contact Cunningham Overhead Door & Windows or the manufacturer.

