

THE HOMEOWNERS JOURNAL

IN THIS ISSUE:

Garage door safety.	1-2
Thermostats are often misused.	1

The Homeowners Journal, is a quarterly newsletter published by JRV Home Inspection Services, LLC. Any comments, questions or suggestions for an article, please contact the editor **Jim Quarello** by e-mail at: jquarello@jrvhomeinspections.com

Or by phone: 203-697-1147.

JRV HOME INSPECTION SERVICES, LLC
28 Edgewood Drive
Wallingford CT 06492

GARAGE DOOR SAFETY

Garage doors are the largest and heaviest moving objects in most homes and, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), an average of 20,000 people are treated in emergency rooms each year for injuries involving a garage door. Injuries range from bumps, bruises, lacerations, and death. Garage door openers manufactured after January 1, 1993 are required by federal law to have advanced safety features, which comply with the latest U.L. 325 standards. A few simple precautions can protect your family from potential harm. Please take a few minutes to read the following safety and maintenance tips. Refer to your garage door and opener owner's manual for details specific to the model you own. Then check the operation of your garage door and automatic opener.

Do not stand or walk under a moving door! Do not let children or adults



play "beat the door." It is dangerous and can result in serious injury or death. Adults should set a good example. Know how to use the emergency release, in case someone is pinned by the door



Do not let children play with or use the transmitters or remote controls. Always place and store them out of the reach of children.

The push-button wall control should be out of reach of children (at least 5 feet from the floor) and away from all moving parts. Mount and use the button where you can clearly see the moving garage door.



Continued on page 2...

THERMOSTATS ARE OFTEN MISUSED

By **KEN SHEINKOPF**

I stopped by a friend's house recently during a horribly hot day, and we began talking about the new air conditioner he had bought a few months before. Don't worry, he told me, it will get cool in a few minutes.

He had turned down the thermostat to about 50 degrees, he explained, so the house would cool quickly. He assured me he would remember to set it back to its normal level later in the day when the house cooled.

I hated to be the one to break the news that he was doing the wrong thing to keep his house comfortable -- and spending a lot of extra money in the process.

Let me give you two guidelines.

Rule No. 1: You don't cool your house any faster in hot weather by turning the thermostat low. The unit won't put out any more cool air or make the house comfortable any faster than if you had just set it to the desired point.

This rule works for using the furnace in cold weather, as well. You don't warm a cold house faster by turning the thermostat up to 90 degrees when you want it at 70.

Rule No. 2: There are recommended comfort settings that maximize energy savings -- 78 degrees in summer, 68 degrees in winter. Any deviation downward from these points in the summer or upward in the winter will cost you

lots of energy -- as much as 8 percent to 10 percent extra energy for each degree you change the setting the "wrong" way.

You save energy whenever you can raise the setting higher in the summer or lower in the winter, and the longer your house stays at those settings, the more energy you will be saving.

Use your thermostat wisely to save energy. It's easy to do, and the results are worth it.

Ken Sheinkopf is associate director of the Florida Solar Energy Center in Cocoa, a research institute of the University of Central Florida.

Teach Your Children about Garage Door and Opener Safety

Garage door openers are not toys. Careless operation and allowing children to play with or use garage door opener controls can lead to tragic results. Discuss garage door safety with your children. Explain the danger of being trapped under the door.



When using the push-button or transmitter, keep the door in sight until it completely stops moving.

Teach children never to play under or near an open garage. Teach children to keep their hands and fingers clear of section joints, hinges, track, springs and other door parts. Contact with a moving door or its hardware could cause serious injury. These injuries can also happen with garage doors that don't have automatic openers.



Routine Maintenance can Prevent Tragedies

There are routine safety and maintenance steps that you should follow once a month. Review your owner's manual for the door opener. If you don't have the owner's manual, look for the opener model number on the back of the power unit and request a manual from the manufacturer.

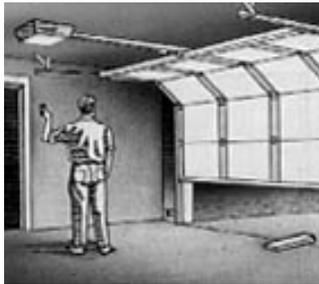
Reversal Test

Make sure your opener has a reversing feature. If a reversing feature is not present, it should be replaced. Contact your manufacturer or installer for additional information.

Test the reversing feature every month.

First, test the balance of the door (see "Testing and Maintaining The Garage Door"). If the door is properly balanced, then proceed.

With the door fully open, place a 1-1/2" thick piece of wood (a 2"x 4" laid flat) on the floor in the center of the door.



Push the transmitter or wall button to close the door. The

door must reverse when it strikes the wood. (Note that the bottom part of "one piece doors" must be rigid so that the door will not close without reversing.)

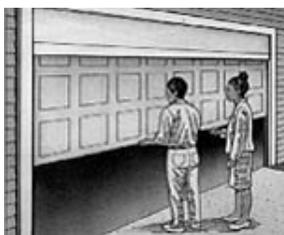
If the door does not reverse, have it repaired or replaced. Have a qualified individual adjust, repair or replace the opener or door.

Force Setting Test

Test the force setting of your garage door opener by holding the bottom of the door as it closes. If the door does not reverse readily, the force may be excessive and need adjusting. See your owner's manual for details on how to make the adjustment. Test the reversing feature after any adjustment.

Additional Safety Devices

Many garage door openers can be equipped with additional safety devices. Consider adding a photo eye or edge sensor as an extra measure of safety to protect against entrapment. Keep in mind that adding more safety devices will not make an old opener meet the current U.L. standards.



Make sure the additional safety devices, such as photo eyes or edge sensors, are properly

installed and adjusted (see owners' manual).

Testing and Maintaining the Garage Door

Perform routine maintenance steps once a month. Review your owner's manual for the garage door. If you don't have a manual, look for the model number on the back of the door, or check the lock handle, hinges, or other hardware for the manufacturer's name and request a manual from the manufacturer.

Visual Inspection

Look at the garage door springs, cables, rollers, pulleys, and other door hardware for signs of wear. If you suspect problems, have a qualified person make repairs.

WARNING - Springs are under high tension. Only qualified persons should adjust them.

Garage door springs, cables, brackets and other hardware attached to the springs, are under very high tension and, if handled improperly, can cause serious injury. Only a qualified professional or a mechanically experienced person carefully following the manufacturer's instructions should adjust them. The torsion springs (the springs above the door) should only be adjusted by a professional. Do not attempt to repair or adjust torsion springs yourself.

A restraining cable or other device should be installed on the extension spring (the spring along the side of the door) to help contain the spring if it breaks

Door Balance

Periodically test the balance of your door. Start with the door closed. If you have a garage door opener, use the release mechanism so you can operate the door by hand when doing this test.

You should be able to lift the door smoothly and with little resistance. It should stay open around three to four feet above the floor. If it does not, it is out of adjustment. Have it adjusted by a qualified service person

This important information is provided by the *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*, the *National Safety Council*, and the *Industry Coalition for Automatic Garage Door Opener Safety*.