

Spike in BBB complaints for garage door businesses

New statistics warrant cause for concern

By Vicki Jones, Editor



According to the latest statistics from the Better Business Bureau (BBB), the number of BBB complaints for “Garage Door Repair” businesses increased 39% in 2021, spiking to 320 from 230 complaints just one year ago. “Garage Door” complaints also saw a drastic increase, jumping from 396 to 496, representing a remarkable 25% increase.

Complaints on the rise

The drastic increase in complaints for the two garage door business categories is disturbing, especially considering that BBB complaints against these businesses have been consistently declining since 2018.

The number of overall complaints (to all business categories, not just door-related categories) increased 6% from 2020 to 2021. While this increase is worth noting, it is much lower than the percentage hike for garage door businesses.

The top 100

While the number of complaints reported may be cause for concern, the complaint ranking for “Garage Door” businesses is even more alarming. Out of 6,197 business categories examined by the BBB in 2021, “Garage Door” ranked 98th. That means our industry is in the top 2% of the most-complained-about businesses in the BBB.

To put this into perspective, one year ago, the “Garage Door” complaint ranking was 396. The “Garage Door Repair” business category ranking also climbed, moving up to 335 from its 559 ranking in 2020.

Inquiries drop

The number of consumer inquiries to the BBB about “Garage Door Repair” companies in 2021 decreased 14% over the previous year. “Garage Door” inquiries also decreased

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COMPLAINTS UP

	Garage Door Repair Complaints	Garage Door Complaints	Total Complaints, All Business Categories
2010	70	325*	874,842
2011	88	417*	927,256
2012	91	506*	984,721
2013	142	629*	918,695
2014	169	708*	873,208
2015	197	653*	870,246
2016	257	534*	860,493
2017	281	536	824,670
2018	225	490	860,847
2019	212	421	935,142
2020	230	396	1,199,413
2021	320	496	1,273,022

Source: The Council of Better Business Bureaus, 2021

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by 13% year over year. These numbers are consistent with the 6% decrease in overall inquiries for all business categories. Decreasing inquiries to the BBB may be a sign that the public is using BBB less and using companies like Google more.

A silver lining

In fall 2019, D+AS published a story titled “Bad Bob losing ground: New statistics reveal signs of progress.” Tom Wadsworth’s article revealed that “Garage Door Repair” complaints had declined 20% in 2018. He concluded the article with “Be watchful, though; after this brief lull, complaints might rise again” especially when companies find new ways to circumvent Google’s systems for weeding out scammers.

An increase in complaints for garage-door-related businesses would typically be considered wholly bad news for the industry. While it certainly shines a spotlight on complaint-worthy practices happening in the door industry, these BBB numbers also reveal that consumers are reporting bad actors for price gouging, deceptive practices, misrepresentation, and other issues. That’s a good thing.

The power of reporting

Garage door companies should monitor their BBB rating and resolve complaints promptly. The increase in BBB complaints may indicate that consumers are also increasingly reporting fraudulent and/or unsavory practices.

These BBB statistics should serve as a wake-up call. Reputable and legitimate companies must be diligent in their efforts to report bad actors to the appropriate sources. Likewise, homeowners must continue to report deceptive practices, fraudulent activity, etc., to the BBB. BBB reporting is an important way to expose bad actors and inform regulatory bodies. ■

INQUIRIES DOWN

	Garage Door Repair Inquiries	Garage Door Inquiries	Total Inquiries, All Business Categories
2010	10,830	61,304*	70,513,519
2011	18,696	102,673*	103,273,134
2012	23,908	153,573*	124,574,968
2013	35,631	241,229*	132,385,251
2014	56,188	335,121*	165,626,296
2015	60,595	330,904*	172,821,300
2016	66,785	312,584*	167,632,180
2017	77,838	286,563	154,443,271
2018	93,134	297,723	170,350,626
2019	97,969	303,195	183,763,029
2020	124,966	376,127	219,547,863
2021	107,238	326,356	206,369,141

Source: The Council of Better Business Bureaus, 2021
 *Prior to 2017, these stats were for “Garage Doors & Openers.”

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