

Clippings are brief summaries of recent news stories in the consumer media. They offer insights to the latest trends and issues for the door business.

Door Dealer Fined \$70,000 After Technician Dies

Source: "Dong Fong Garage Fined \$72,500 After Worker Killed By Fall," Canada Ministry of Labour, Court Bulletin, July 4, 2013.

On March 20, 2010, a garage door technician from Dong Fong Garage was removing a spring on a large industrial garage door in Markham, Ontario. The spring popped out of its bracket, hit the worker on the chest, and knocked him off a ladder. The tech fell more than 10' and subsequently died from the injuries.

"The tech fell more than 10' and subsequently died from the injuries."

Three years later, Dong Fong Garage was convicted under Canada's Occupational Health and Safety Act and fined \$72,500 for: (1) failing to provide a scaffold to a worker when work could not be done safely from the ground, (2) failing to ensure that a worker was adequately protected by a fall protection system, and (3) failing to provide instruction to the worker to protect his health and safety.

Editor's Note: Read this story at your next employee meeting. Then make sure you never make these mistakes.

GDO Interference Problems Continue

Source: Lesley Conn, "Army repeaters cited as cause for faulty garage-door openers," Savannah (Ga.) Morning News, April 17, 2013; Brianne Randle, "Garage door problems for homeowners may be linked to Navy," KHON-TV, Honolulu, Hawaii, April 23, 2013; and Jessica Wilder, "Fort Gordon Radio Upgrade Causes Garage Door Havoc," ABC News, June 13, 2013. (The Fort Gordon story was also covered by CNN, UPI, and the London Daily Mail.)

When hundreds of people can't open their garage doors, it's a problem. In these three cases in April and June, the problem hit hundreds of homes around Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga., Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii, and Fort Gordon in Augusta, Ga. In all cases, local door dealers were swamped with phone calls.

Editor's Note: We covered this problem back in 2004 and 2005 when the military started rolling out its new land mobile radio system, operating on 390 MHz. It appears that many dealers have forgotten about the issue. So, here are a few reminders.

When these interference problems occur, the problem should be temporary, and wired controls will continue to work. Since 2005, many remote control manufacturers have minimized the problem by using a frequency of 315 MHz on new controls instead of 390 MHz. For more information, go to www.fcc.gov and do an EDOCS search for 05-424.

Billionaire Has World's Widest Garage Door?

Source: Keith Seinfeld, "World's largest garage door: First giant step for Allen's spaceship," NPR via KPLU 88.5 FM, March 28, 2013.

Billionaire Paul Allen (of Microsoft fame) may have the world's widest garage door. The garage, located in the Mojave Desert, houses a gigantic 385'-wide airplane, which is about twice as wide as a huge Boeing 777.

Allen seeks to use the plane as a platform for launching rockets that send people and satellites into orbit. The first test flight is targeted for 2016.

Editor's Note: The door must be about 400' wide. Kudos to the team that manufactured it and especially to those who installed it.

3-Year-Old Killed in Garage Door Accident

Source: Clarence Williams and Martin Weil, "3-year-old girl dies after being pinned by garage door," Washington Post, April 5, 2013.

In what appears to be a freak accident, a 3-year-old girl died after being pinned under an automatic garage door at a home in Waldorf, Md.

Investigators think that she might have pushed the door's control button and then tried to run out of the garage. She was found quickly, but a preliminary investigation indicated that she may have died of asphyxiation.

In a news report from the local NBC affiliate (WRC TV), a sheriff's spokesperson said, "The sensors appear to be six inches in height." Another report said the wall button was "within her reach."

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Editor's Note: This story is horribly tragic, and we may never know how this happened. Our industry has had such an excellent record

ever since the 1993 law requiring photo-eyes went into effect. In the meantime, always (1) install photo-eyes no more than 6" off the ground, (2) mount the wall button at least 5' from the standing surface, (3) educate the homeowner about safety precautions, and (4) attach the required warning label near the wall control button.

Google Glass May Open Garage Doors

Source: Megan Rose Dickey, "Google Glass may eventually be able to control your garage door, refrigerator, and other home appliances," *Business Insider*, March 21, 2013.

"Google recently applied for a patent that would enable a wearable computer with a head-mounted display (like Glass) to control physical objects like refrigerators, espresso machines, and garage doors," says this story.

Glass would use sensors to detect the garage door in view and automatically give the user the option to open it. The user could then send the command via voice, a head motion, or a hand gesture.

GDO Thieves Target Churchgoers

Source: Breann Bierman, "Police investigate car burglaries at AZ churches," *KPHO-TV, CBS 5, Phoenix, Ariz.*, June 21, 2013, and "Garage door openers being stolen," *Peoria (Ariz.) Times*, June 12, 2013.

For a thief, this caper is a piece of cake. Go to a church parking lot on a Sunday morning, shortly after the service starts. Look for a nice car with an unlocked door and a GDO remote control on the visor. After all, what churchgoer thinks he needs to lock the car in a *church parking lot*?

Grab the transmitter and take the vehicle registration from the glove box. Then drive to the home address found on the registration, press the remote to open the garage door, pull in your pickup truck, and close the door.

You've probably got a good hour to waltz through the house and take anything you want. Load up the truck and drive away. Done!

Peoria, Ariz., police reported at least three such incidents in that area. They urge residents to lock the registration in the glove box and never leave the remote in the vehicle.

Editor's Note: We've said it before, and we'll say it again. Warn your customers about this devious scheme. Offer them mini transmitters that can be kept on their key chains.

GDO Remote Thief Blunders, Arrested at Scene

Source: Rob Nagle, "Garage-door opener leads to theft suspect," *San Francisco Examiner*, May 20, 2013.

In May, San Francisco police arrested a man suspected of multiple burglaries. That's not unusual. What's unusual is how he was discovered.

At 3:40 one morning, police responded to a residence after someone reported an unknown man walking out of a neighbor's garage. When police arrived, the garage door began to open and close.

Police noticed a car parked nearby with foggy windows and a man ducking down in the front seat. Police discovered that he had been sitting on the GDO remote control. Inside the car, police found stolen items from at least eight other car burglaries.

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