

Clippings are brief summaries of recent news articles in the consumer media. These stories offer a peek at how garage door companies and products are being reported to the public.

Garage door repairman facing attempted murder charges

Source: "Sacramento repairman accused of killing customer during argument," *The Mercury News (Sacramento, Calif.)*, Aug. 2, 2019.

On July 25, a garage door technician allegedly got into an argument with a customer. After returning to his place of business, the repairman told a co-worker that he "may have killed a customer," according to Sacramento TV station KOVR.

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The employer called the authorities, who then went to the home and found a 64-year-old man with life-threatening injuries. The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department said that the man died a few days later due to blunt-force trauma to the upper body.

The repairman was arrested and is being held without bail at the Sacramento County jail.

Editor's note: This may be the first time in our industry that a technician has been charged with attempted murder of a customer. What are you doing to ensure that none of your employees ever commits a serious felony? During the hiring process, check references to research that this type of behavior has never happened before. Once you hire, treat employees fairly.

NGDS exposed on Oklahoma television

Source: Scott Hines, "91-year-old Oklahoma man overcharged for shoddy garage door repairs," *KFOR-TV (NBC4) (Oklahoma City, Okla.)*, Sept. 12, 2019.

In this 4-minute report, the NBC affiliate in Oklahoma City investigated the garage door company responsible for charging a 91-year-old man \$1,400 for repairs that may not have been needed.

The elderly man called for a repair after a power surge disabled his garage door opener, his microwave, and his coffee pot. The door company gave him a new GDO and a new spring, along with an extension cord draped across the garage ceiling, and charged him \$1,400.

What was the company? It was Neighborhood Garage Door Services (NGDS) based in Carrollton, Texas, the same company as Garage Door Services, which was exposed in our magazine in 2015 as "The worst garage door company in the nation."

A reputable local dealer was called to fix the shoddy work. He said the springs were unnecessary, the charge was double what he would've billed, and the wiring installation was "poorly done and dangerous."

KFOR reported, "Loads of customers online claim they too were grossly overcharged." The reporter called NGDS repeatedly, but messages were not responded to, and the reporter was hung up on twice.

Editor's note: KFOR mentioned that the 91-year-old man found NGDS in a newspaper ad. It appears that Google's refusal to accept NGDS's ads still applies in Oklahoma City. That may result in fewer victims, but this story suggests that they're getting the "same friendly service."

Precision Phoenix exposed again

Source: Robert Anglen, "'Garage-Door Guy' stiff's customers," *Arizona Republic (Phoenix)*, June 10, 2019; and "'Garage-Door Guy' who stiffed Arizona customers caught in 2011 'Dateline NBC' sting," *Arizona Republic*, June 18, 2019.

There are two powerful investigative stories here from the Arizona Republic. In the June 10 story, consumer investigations reporter Robert Anglen detailed how Richard Killingsworth scammed homeowners for thousands of dollars in his garage door repair work in the Phoenix market. In this story, Killingsworth admitted, "I've worked for rip-off companies. I don't want to be one of them."

Remember that our winter 2018 cover story covered Killingsworth's notorious reputation as a longtime technician for Charan Gohlwar at Precision Door of Phoenix. Killingsworth left Precision around 2016 and started his own company as "Garage-Door Guy."

On June 18, Anglen wrote a follow-up article, in which Killingsworth is quoted as saying that Precision often pressured sales staff to upsell customers on services. The updated story also noted that Precision's corporate office had terminated Gohlwar's franchise license because of "fraudulent pricing, falsifying reviews, and discriminatory compensation," and it included several statements by Charan Gohlwar.

Gohlwar fired back at Killingsworth, saying, "He is the one that took money from customers." Gohlwar also responded to Precision, claiming that they had discriminated against him. As reported in the Republic, Gohlwar said, "I am a native of India. I feel strongly that I have been discriminated against by Precision Door. They didn't want me to be at the top of the company."

Editor's note: Sound familiar? As we reported in our winter 2018 exposé, Gohlwar also brazenly accused our reporter Tom Wadsworth of discriminating against him because of his "race and national origin."

Update: By Aug. 20, 2019, Gohlwar's Phoenix and Tucson operations ceased their association with Precision. As stated in the Republic's story, Gohlwar is now operating as "Elite Garage Doors and Gates."

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Garage door company using fake address

Source: Alexis Zotos, "Upset customers show up at South City family home after business uses fake address," KMOV4 (South St. Louis), Aug. 13, 2019.

In this television report, one building owner discovered that Maven Garage Door Repairs was fraudulently claiming the address at 3501 Indiana as their business address. At that address, the property owner has even been visited by disgruntled customers of Maven Garage Door Repairs.

After several attempts to contact Maven Garage Doors, Channel 4 News connected with a man over the phone who identified himself as Phil from Maven Garage Door Repairs.

After changing his story several times, Phil eventually said, "There's nothing at

"we picked it because it's the center of town so when people Google us, it pops up."

the address, it's a business address. Listen, the reason we have the address is because it's the center of town, and we picked it because it's the center of town so when people Google us, it pops up."

KMOV contacted Google, and they said they try their best to detect such scams, but it's hard to eliminate them entirely. The TV report said that Maven's fraudulent address has since disappeared from Google.

Editor's note: In our fall issue cover story, we reported the widespread problem of fake addresses used by scammers in the garage door industry. This St. Louis story reiterates the growing trend and frustrating problems associated with these companies. You can fight this problem by reporting such fake addresses and listings to Google at <http://bit.ly/googleredressal>.

Spike in garage break-ins

Source: Caley Ramsay, "Garage break and enters up 73% over 5 years: Edmonton police," Global News (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada), Sept. 1, 2019.

This news story reported that garage break-ins are up 73% in the Edmonton area in Alberta. According to local police, the total number of reported garage break and enters and attempted break and enters significantly jumped from 2014 to 2018.

2014: 1,238
2015: 1,676
2016: 1,919
2017: 1,945
2018: 2,145

The police offered several preventive measures that homeowners can follow to decrease their chances of becoming the next theft victim. First and foremost, never leave garage door remote controls in your vehicle. It's an invitation to an easy and increasingly common way for thieves to instantly access your home.

Authorities suggest that if your remote control is stolen, reprogram all remotes connected to that door opener. Also, installing motion sensor lighting and protective fencing, maintaining your yard, and getting to know your neighbors are additional recommendations.

Editor's note: What can dealers learn from this story? If homeowners have an attached garage, their remote control is a key to their house. Warn your customers about the dangers of leaving remotes in plain sight or in unlocked vehicles.