



CPSC Safety Alert

Non-Reversing Automatic Garage Door Openers Are a Hazard

Homeowners with automatic garage door openers that do not automatically reverse should repair or replace them with new reversing openers. This prevents young children from being trapped and killed under closing garage doors.

According to reports received by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), about 73 children between the ages of 2 and 14 have been trapped and killed under automatic garage doors since March 1982. This is about three such deaths per year on average. Other children have suffered brain damage or serious injuries when the closing door hit them, and failed to stop and reverse its direction.

CPSC urges homeowners to:

- **Replace older automatic garage door openers with reversing openers that meet the federal safety standard.**

CPSC requires that all garage door openers manufactured or imported for sale in the United States after January 1, 1991 have reversing systems. A requirement for external entrapment protection system was added in 1993. This system can be an electric eye, a door edge sensor, or any other device that provides equivalent protection. If an electric eye is used, it should be installed at a height of 4 to 6 inches above the floor.



- **Test the garage door opener's reverse function.**

Place a 2x4 on the floor of the garage in the door's path. If the door does not properly reverse when striking the 2x4 then the garage door opener should be disengaged until the unit is either adjusted according to the instructions in the owner's manual, repaired, or replaced with a new garage door opener.

- **Inspect the garage door and the garage door opener every 30 days to make sure they are working properly.**



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A properly operating garage door will be "balanced." This means that the door will stay in place when stopped in any partially-open position. A severely unbalanced garage door could unexpectedly crash to the floor possibly striking someone under the open door. If doors are not "balanced," or if they bind or stick, they should be serviced by a professional.

- **Check the springs, hardware and fittings.**

To check the garage door manually, make sure the door is closed, pull the "quick release" mechanism to detach the garage door from the opener. Using the garage door handle, manually move the door up and down to check that the springs are operating properly. Hardware and fittings

should be checked to keep the door on track at all times.

- **Install the push button wall control as high as practical on the garage door's wall to restrict children's access to it.**

- **Keep the remote control door opener device away from children.** Parents also should warn their children about the potential hazard posed by garage doors.

Pub. 523
009608Rv0411