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TOP 10 SECRETS ABOUT TODAY'S GARAGE DOORS

(ARA) - In the last few years, garage doors have experienced a major transformation in their role on the American home. Today's garage doors do a lot more than go up and down.

They deliver style. They can help sell your home in a difficult market. They can save energy and protect your house from powerful winds. They don't need to be affected by power outages anymore. They can even tell you when you've forgotten to close them.

Does your garage door do any of that? If your door is 10 years old or older, it probably doesn't. Want a reason to replace your garage door?

There are plenty of reasons listed on GarageWowNow.com, a new non-commercial Web site devoted to the new role of today's garage doors. The site includes dozens of before and after photos that really tell the story.

Here are 10 little-known facts about today's new garage doors. They can ...

1. Add a unique style to your home's appearance.

Does every home on your street have the same garage door? A new carriage house garage door can differentiate your home and greatly increase its curb appeal. Today's trendy looks range from hundreds of different styles of carriage house doors, contemporary doors and even raised panel doors in unique finishes and colors.

2. Help sell your home.

Replacing your garage door could increase your home's asking price anywhere from one to four percent, according to a 2006 nationwide study of real estate agents by Stratamark Research. In a tough housing market, you can differentiate your home by upgrading the one item that can comprise up to a third of your home's front facade

3. Save energy.

Today's garage doors offer insulation options that can save energy in both winter and summer. The federal government agrees. In 2006 and 2007, the IRS granted a tax credit to homeowners who replaced their garage door with a qualified insulated door.



After photo: Garage doors as a fashion statement? Absolutely. Consider this home's added curb appeal after a garage door update. To see more new garage door styles visit GarageWowNow.com.



Before Photo: The same home before a new garage door.

4. Protect your home from powerful winds.

Hurricanes, tornadoes and strong wind storms can reduce your home to rubble. Wind experts now recognize the critical role played by the garage door in protecting your home from high winds. Code-approved, wind-resistant garage doors are now widely available. In many wind-prone areas, these doors are not just helpful; they're mandated by the building code.

5. Withstand power outages.

The garage door is now used more than the front entry door, according to the 2007 Perfect Home Survey. Since most doors are now automated, how will you get in your home during a power outage? Thanks to garage door opener battery backup systems, your door can keep operating even when power is gone.

6. Tell you when you've left it open.

An open garage, especially at night, is an invitation to thieves and vandals. Today's garage door openers offer in-house monitors that alert you when you've left your door open – a security tool that provides peace-of-mind.

7. Operate at the touch of a fingertip.

Exterior keypads are rapidly growing in popularity. The latest keypad models offer fingerprint-recognition technology that eliminates the need to remember codes and offers fast and easy secure access.

8. Replace your front door.

A recent nationwide survey of consumers reveals that 71 percent of homeowners use their garage door to enter and exit their home every day. In today's fast-paced society, the garage door is the new front door for the American home. The garage door is more convenient, and it commands more attention than the front entry door.

9. Reflect your personal style.

Are you into a sleek modern look or the quaint charm of yesteryear? Today's manufacturers are producing hundreds of distinct varieties that were not available 10 years ago. Why settle for a door that looks like every other door on your street?

10. Be installed by a pro.

This isn't a job for the weekend DIYer. It's a complex and potentially dangerous task. It's best done by a pro, who can do the job in a few short hours, haul your old door away and make sure your new door and opener are operating properly. You can find the garage door professional nearest you at GarageWowNow.com.