

STOPPING COLD INFILTRATION

By Roy Bardowell, CDDC

With winter just around the corner, it is a good idea to check your garage door for air leaks. Most garage doors are insulated to restrain cold air from entering your garage. Of course, there are warmer regions where this is not an issue, however Northern regions can see sub-zero temperatures from November to March. If you park your car in the garage, you are truly aware how much more -ozy it is getting into a car that is NOT freezing inside. Some people never heat their garage because they know it can be a waste of energy and the heat only finds its way out of the garage as it goes up in smoke. However, you can control any heat loss with a simple check.

I lived in Montreal from 1978 to 1996 and I can attest to what it means to be cold outside and the pleasure of having a heated garage. January is the coldest month in Montreal with temperatures going as low as minus 35 degrees it can also be quite miserable waiting for the car engine to heat up so you can turn on the heat. On really cold days this could take 20 minutes or more. If your car is outside during these extremely cold nights it is possible for your fuel line to freeze which will prevent the car from starting.

One time when I could not start my pickup truck, I had to have a friend push my truck with his car into my garage. After two days the fuel line defrosted and I was finally able to start the vehicle. If I had parked my truck inside, I would have never experienced this headache. However, my garage door was insulated with polyurethane foam insulation

which did an excellent job of separating the cold from the heated garage.

Garage Door insulation is rated with the common R factor. An R Factor of R 10 to R 14 is very good. Over the last 10 years air infiltration has been added to the equation as a U Factor. A garage door with a R 14 insulation value having a poor perimeter seal is useless. Having a good insulated garage door is a plus, but weather-seal that seals the garage door perimeter to the floor and wooden garage frame is just as important.



Door Seal works great with all types of garage doors.

On the bottom of the door there is a rubber U-shaped seal that keeps snow, bugs, and rain from entering your garage at the floor. (Figure A)

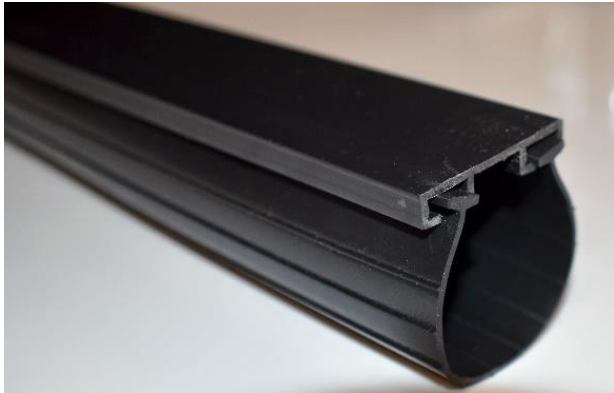


FIGURE A

You should check this item first to be sure the rubber is secured from side to side. In other words, the rubber bottom seal should be well attached on the entire width of the door. After the bottom seal, you will have the side weather seals (Fig B). The side seals will be attached from the top header to the floor. The rubber flaps should be in contact with the door on both sides.



Figure B

The best way to check this is with the door closed and you outside. Do this in the autumn before it gets to cold outside. If the rubber flaps are making good contact with the door, you are in good shape until the next winter. It is prudent to check the perimeter of your garage door(s) before every cold spell. Having a well-sealed door will make your garage much more comfortable in winter. This is your main goal and a simple 5-minute weather seal check can make your winter much more tolerable.



If you suspect your weather-seal is under-performing and on its last days, then a call to your local garage door service company will be in order. Many doors will use a specific weather seal that usually cannot be found at the DIY hardware store. The professional service companies are familiar with most door brands and the many types of weather seal. By utilizing a professional garage door company, you can ensure you receive the correct product and it will be installed for optimum performance.

Roy Bardowell, CDDC, served as Operations Manager at Guardian Access & Door Hardware until 2014. He has been in the door and operator industry since 1973 and is known as one of the industry's most experienced operator technicians and trainers. Roy received the IDEA Commitment to Excellence award in 2008 and IDA's Jerry R. Reynolds Volunteer Service Award in 2017. Contact him at roythedoorman@gmail.com