



America's Favorite Garage Doors®

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Contact Mischel Schonberg
319-363-3144

HURRICANE ANDREW'S LESSONS THEN APPLY TO CHARLEY'S VICTIMS NOW

ANDREW'S LESSONS THEN APPLY TO CHARLEY'S VICTIMS NOW '92 Storm Revealed Most Residential Hurricane Wind Damage Caused by Garage Door Blow-outs CINCINNATI -- (August 14, 2004) – In the aftermath of Hurricane Charley Florida residents must now assess the damage and begin to rebuild. According to The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH), a non-profit organization, approximately 80% of residential hurricane damage starts with wind entry through garage doors. "As the single largest opening on a house, the loss of a garage door during a hurricane can lead to an uncontrolled buildup of internal pressure resulting in a complete or partial blowout of the entire roof system and supporting walls," said Mark Westerfield, manager of product development and engineering for Clopay Building Products Company, the largest U.S. manufacturer of residential garage doors. "Hurricane Andrew taught the building products industry and homeowners some valuable lessons on the importance of being prepared for the worst-case scenario," he continued. "Garage doors are now considered to be one of the most important parts of a building's structure in regards to maintaining its structural integrity during a hurricane." In March 2002, ten years after Hurricane Andrew ravaged South Florida, the state adopted stricter building codes that require new garage doors or replacement doors to be structurally reinforced to withstand specific wind load requirements. In Miami-Dade and Broward counties the wind load requirement is 146mph and 140 mph, respectively. In other parts of Florida, it ranges from 100 – 150 mph. "To meet the new codes, garage doors must have heavier gauge tracking and springs to help keep them in place under extreme wind loads," added Westerfield. "Retrofitting a door with new hardware won't provide the same structural integrity as a new door in the event of a storm." "To meet the new code, garage doors must have additional bracing, heavier gauge tracking and other necessary hardware and support to help keep them in place under extreme wind loads," said Westerfield. "Retrofitting a door with new hardware won't provide the same structural integrity as a new door in the event of a storm." Homeowners who have not replaced their garage door since the code took effect should consider installing a code-approved, reinforced model. Selecting a Reinforced Garage Door The first step in doing so is to determine the wind load requirement for the geographic area and find a door that meets it. Local building code officials can help. Two kinds of reinforced doors are available. One type features floor to ceiling poles or pins that a homeowner has to install in the event of a storm warning to secure the door. The poles must be removed after the storm passes to resume normal operation. Other models such as Clopay's WindCode door require no advance set-up. Reinforcements are contained within the structure of the door and are engaged by simply locking the door, a real timesaving convenience in the event of a sudden evacuation notice. This type of door is a good solution for vacation homeowners whose permanent residence is several hours away or even outside the state because they can have a local neighbor or rental agent simply lock the door, and take comfort in the fact that it's secured. Safety in Style A reinforced door doesn't necessarily mean covering the garage opening in a sea of solid steel panels. There are many code compliant design options available to complement most architectural styles, from Shaker, to Mediterranean, to Arts & Crafts. Clopay is the first manufacturer in the industry to develop decorative windows that can withstand 350-pounds of impact energy as required by the new stricter code. The company is also offering its new Coachman Collection steel carriage house doors with WindCode reinforcement. The doors look like hardwood on the outside, but are actually crafted of layers of steel and insulation topped with custom designed, coped wood grain finished PVC overlays. "New technology means people don't have to sacrifice style for safety. Still, they do have to plan ahead to have the technology in place when the winds hit the shores," added Westerfield. To instantly locate a Clopay door dealer in your area, log onto the web site at www.clopaydoor.com, and enter your zip code in the Find a Dealer section or call 800-225-6729. For specific information about wind load requirements for a particular city or state, contact the local building code authority having jurisdiction. # # #