

How Long Should My Garage Door Spring Last?

Posted on September 29, 2015

A garage door spring is absolutely critical to the very operation of a garage door. The garage door itself is something that is most likely used on a daily basis. So how long will the average spring last? And how can you ensure that you maximize its life potential?

Different Types of Garage Door Springs

Garage door springs, also called torsion springs, are categorized by number of cycles. A 10,000-cycle torsion spring is the standard spring installed in most garages. Higher cycle springs, including those that last 25,000 cycles and those that will last 50,000 cycles, are even more cost-effective when the cost is analyzed on a yearly basis. However, when looking at high-cycle springs, you also have to analyze what type of garage you have and what its lifespan might be. If you choose a type of spring that outlasts the garage in which it is installed, you've wasted your money. If, however, you have a well-founded structure likely to last as long as the house it accompanies, a high-cycle spring is a worthwhile investment.

Average Life Expectancy

The life expectancy of a garage door spring can only be calculated in cycles, but you can easily translate that to a time estimate. The average home opens and closes a garage door four times daily, and, with a 10,000-cycle torsion spring, this translates to a lifespan of approximately seven years. Thus, high-cycle springs can have lifespans that last from 14 to 20 years.

Common Causes of Premature Aging

Your garage door spring, like any other metal component, can be affected detrimentally by wetter climates. Moisture on the metal creates an environment ripe for rust. Rust buildup causes the core friction to increase, thus wearing down the metal of the spring even more rapidly.

Cold is another serious factor. Steel contracts and becomes more brittle with severe cold weather. It's therefore logical that garage door springs most often break in cold weather. After a cold night, the unsuspecting homeowner expects the garage spring to perform its duty as it does every other morning. But without being allowed to gradually warm up just a bit, a loud crack will let you know it's taken more stress than it could handle in the cold, and you've got a broken spring on your hands.

Preventative Measures to Extend Life

It's so easy to prevent the wear and tear caused by both of these environmental factors. In order to prevent rust, every three months or so, spray it with a silicone coating spray. Some advice: avoid WD-40, which is a lubricant rather than a silicone coating spray, particularly if you park your car in the garage, because WD-40 eats paint. And when cold weather strikes, try two things: listen, and warm up. Allow the day to warm up the garage for as long as you can prior to opening the garage; if you have a space heater, in extreme cold, it might offer some assistance in this regard. Then, make sure you listen very carefully as the garage door opens. Stop the lift as soon as you here the slightest irregular creaking.
