

A great fall fix up starts with your garage door

What is the one fall home fix-up project that takes only a couple of hours and yields the biggest bang for the buck of any exterior home renovation?

Here's a clue: This project adds style, energy efficiency and security to your home, and the preparation is easy and mess free -- all you need is an Internet connection and a telephone. For most people, the answer does not immediately come to mind: it's a stylish new garage door.

Think about it. If your house has an attached garage, the garage door may comprise more than one-third of your home's front facade. If that home is more than five years old, your garage door probably is a solid-colored, raised-panel door that looks like every other garage door in the neighborhood.

A new door, quickly and correctly installed by a local professional, will differentiate your home and add style, value and curb appeal. The hottest new style in garage doors is the carriage house design. It's available in steel, wood or composite materials and in many price ranges.

Tom Wadsworth, long-time editor of a garage door industry trade magazine, says the carriage house garage door is "the first major new design in garage doors in more than 25 years." He says that all major manufacturers have joined "the carriage house craze" and offer thousands of unique variations of the doors.

A garage door is an important home improvement project. It is typically the first thing people notice when they pull into your driveway or pass your house. Doors also offer protection against severe weather and theft, help

you save money on heating bills and substantially increase the appearance and value of your home.

A nationwide poll of realtors revealed more than 71 percent felt a new garage door added to the value of a home, even adding as much

as four percent of the selling price. That means \$10,000 on a \$250,000 home, which is a huge deal for people wanting to sell now during a difficult real estate market.

If you think installing a new garage door project is "easier said than done," think again.

GarageWowNow.com, a non-commercial Web site, explains the impact that a new garage door can have on a home. It's a resource that helps homeowners redesign the outside of their homes, and the site offers tips on garage door design and gives them an opportunity to view scores of door styles.

The Web site also provides before and after photos that show how a garage door dramatically changes a home's appearance. It also features a list of all the major North American garage door manufacturers and a handy Find a Dealer/Installer Zip Code Search to help people look for the nearest qualified garage door professional.

Hiring a pro is a smart move. Garage doors are heavy and operated by springs under extremely high tension. It's dangerous to install a door yourself.

Log onto www.GarageWowNow.com and call for professional installation. After only a few hours of the pro's work, you'll get a stunning home makeover that will make you proud every time you pull in your driveway.



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