

# Reinforce or Replace Garage Doors



FEMA

## PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY FROM HIGH WINDS

High winds from hurricanes and tornadoes can damage garage doors or even blow them in. If wind enters a garage, it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage. Reinforcing your garage door helps to protect not only your garage, but its contents as well.

As shown in the figure, you can reinforce a garage door by adding girts (usually wooden boards) across the back of the door and by strengthening the glider wheel tracks. If your existing door is old or damaged, you might want to replace it with a stronger door and tracks. Even if you decide to buy a new door, reinforcing it is still a good idea. Hardware and home supply stores, as well as companies that specialize in overhead door sales and installation, can advise you about stronger doors and track systems.

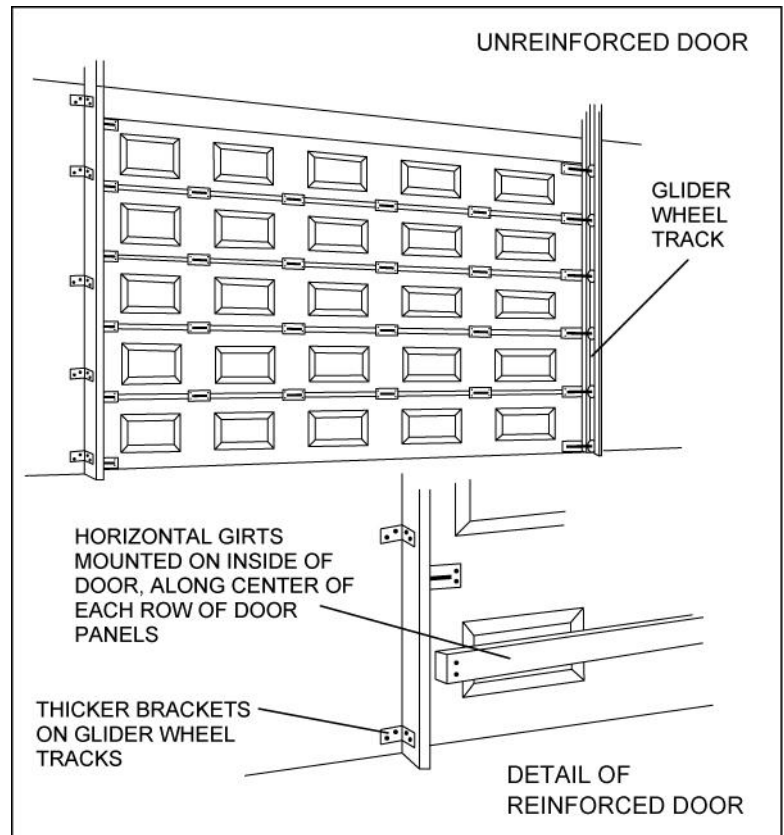
### BENEFITS OF UTILIZING THIS MITIGATION STRATEGY

- Helps to prevent structural damage
- Helps to prevent damage to or loss of contents in the garage

### TIPS

Keep these points in mind when you reinforce or replace your garage doors:

- ✓ Reinforcing an existing garage door is something you may be able to do yourself if you have the necessary skills and tools. Otherwise, you can hire a contractor to do the work. The necessary materials, including metal brackets and wood boards for girts, can usually be found at a lumber yard, hardware store, or home supply store.
- ✓ Single-car garage doors usually resist wind forces better than two-car garage doors.
- ✓ Don't wait until a hurricane or tornado warning is issued to reinforce your garage door; you probably won't have time.
- ✓ Installing a new garage door is more than a one-person job and is not the type of work that most property owners who lack the necessary skills and equipment would want to undertake. If you buy a new door, you may want to either have the seller install it or hire a contractor.



- ✓ If you are buying a new door, get one without windows. Unless covered, glass is easily broken by high winds and windblown debris. Again, one reason for protecting your garage door is to prevent wind from entering the garage and damaging the contents inside.
- ✓ Check local code requirements in your area.

## **ESTIMATED COST**

If you hire a contractor to reinforce an existing two-car garage door, you can expect to pay about \$300. The cost of replacing a door, including installation, can vary greatly, depending on the size and type of door.

## **OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

FEMA 247, *Against the Wind, Protecting Your Home from Hurricane Wind Damage*, December 1993, <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1641>.

FEMA 488, *Hurricane Charley in Florida: Mitigation Assessment Team Report, Observations, Recommendations, and Technical Guidance*, Chapter 8, "Recommendations," April 2005, <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=1444>.

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