

The Door & Hardware Federation (DHF), representing the UK's manufacturers, suppliers and installers of industrial doors and shutters, emphasises the importance of maintenance

Cutting back on Door Maintenance — 'penny wise, pound foolish'

Companies cut costs as they battle for survival during the recession and one of the first casualties can be the routine maintenance of industrial doors and shutters. In every well-run company, preventive maintenance programmes protect critical equipment to ensure production lines are not disrupted by unexpected mechanical failure. Doors, however, are often neglected, but they too need regular maintenance, for failure can result in expensive consequences.

Power operated doors and shutters, are classed as machinery. This places a responsibility on the designated maintenance or facilities manager, to ensure that they are regularly maintained, says the DHF - yet it is estimated that only 15-20% of UK industrial premises have maintenance programmes in place. This proportion could be falling as the recession continues to force companies to cut costs, says the DHF. In addition, owners and managers of industrial premises have a poor record in maintaining and testing fire doors. According to the DHF, 85-90% of industrial buildings have no fire door maintenance or testing procedures in place. Failure to carry out adequate maintenance impacts in four ways:



Fire resistant doors are designed to close quickly when fire breaks out, preventing the fire from spreading. There is now an even more pressing need for building managers to familiarise themselves with the location of fire doors and to ensure regular maintenance and testing procedures are in place. Fire officers no longer certify buildings. Instead there are self-certification obligations on the building owner to declare that correct maintenance procedures are being followed. However, maintenance and testing of fire doors just does not happen in the majority of UK industrial/commercial premises due, the DHF believes, to a lack of awareness.

Invalidating Insurance Cover

There is evidence that insurance companies are tightening up on companies that do not fulfil their maintenance obligations on doors and shutters and, increasingly, they are asking that written maintenance records accompany any claim. Failure to do so could lead to the claim being rejected. The first step for the factory manager to take should be to obtain a list of door maintenance specialists who are

members of the repair and service group (RSG) of the DHF. All DHF members work to the standards set out in the DHF Code of Practice for Repairing and Maintaining Industrial and Commercial Doors - a detailed document prepared to meet the needs of specifiers, end users and safety enforcement authorities. Each RSG member works through a checklist detailing the sequence and scope of maintenance work for each type of door.

Typically, a service takes a maintenance team one hour, depending on location and accessibility of the door. If the door manufacturer's maintenance instructions are not available the DHF member will recommend the correct frequency for door maintenance, either once or twice a year for a door operated 1000 times in that year, depending on the environment in which the door is situated. For example, a door will need servicing more frequently if it is in a foundry or paintshop, where dust can penetrate its lubricated parts.

The message is clear. Ensuring the reliability and long life of industrial doors and shutters is a valuable investment, especially in the current economic turnaround. It will save money, ensure you keep within the law, reduce risks and make sure your insurance company is behind you in the worst scenario case. ✨

Visit www.dhfonline.org.uk for more details of the DHF, find a repair and service group member, or download a copy of the DHF Code of Practice for the Repair and Maintenance of Industrial and Commercial Doors. Alternatively call +44 (0)1827 52337.

Financial loss

Failure to regularly maintain industrial doors and shutters can incur high repair costs. Typically, the cost of repairing a jammed or failed door would be very little compared to the cost incurred should your business be brought to a complete halt if, say, the goods-in entrance, and/or the goods-out exit, jammed shut.

Real Danger

It takes only missing rollers on a poorly maintained sectional overhead door, frayed cables, or a failed spring, to run the risk of a half tonne door crashing down in occupied areas of the factory.

