

## COZY HOME CORNER

By the Zerodraft House Doctor

### Weatherstrip Metal-Framed Horizontal Sliding Windows and Patio Doors to Stop Drafts and Improve Comfort

***Properly weatherstripping horizontal sliding windows and patio doors can improve the durability, energy efficiency and comfort of your house.***

Sliding windows and patio doors can be big energy wasters and allow cold drafts because they have many paths where air leakage can occur. In this column, we'll discuss installing professional-grade weatherseals on horizontal sliding windows and patio doors.

Most metal-framed sliding windows and doors have an existing cotton-based pile type of weatherstrip. Over time, the material shrinks and becomes worn from weather and wear. Once it breaks down, the door or window starts to rattle and let in the draft. The wheels or sliders can also break down with age, contributing to further rattling and drafts.

A more modern solution is a polypropylene brush pile with a clear fin in the centre. Designed to slide into the same slot pre-formed in the metal frame as the old-style cotton strip, the polypropylene offers superior weather resistance and the fin provides a better draft seal.

You won't find this type of seal at your local hardware store, but the improved performance and longer life-expectancy it offers are well-worth the visit to an industrial supplier. Take along a sample of your existing seal to make sure you get the correct base width and brush and fin height. To get at the existing seal, you'll need to lift out the window or door to expose the worn weatherstripping. Starting at a corner, use a standard flat-edge screwdriver to widen the T-slot just a little bit, then use a pair of needle-nosed pliers to pull the old weatherstripping out.

Most sliding windows and patio doors have weatherstripping in both the front and back on all sides. With the new polypropylene brush and fin, you will only want to install it on the front side, otherwise you may find it difficult to open and shut the door or window.

Once you have removed the old weatherstripping using the same method as used to obtain your sample, you can simply slide the new polypropylene brush and fin into the T-slot, and then crimp the ends of the slot to hold it in place. Don't forget to check the wheels and sliders for wear and replace if needed.

To finish, caulk the trim and fixed (non-sliding) side of the window or door using clear siliconized latex to complete air seal continuity.

Properly air sealing your metal-framed horizontal sliding windows and patio door will make a big difference to the comfort and energy efficiency of your home.

