

Crossing the Threshold

A Homeowners Tutorial Regarding Door Replacement at Upstairs Balconies

Introduction:

You may be considering replacing your upstairs patio door. It is important to remember that your upstairs patio doors are different than the 1st floor door. This is because what is called the Door Sill Pan. This Door Sill Pan flashing is a necessary part of your upstairs waterproof decking.

What is a Door Sill Pan and what is its purpose?

A door pan is an integral component of the metal flashing details for any waterproof system. Its purpose is to transition and terminate the waterproofing system into the door opening to prevent water intrusion, specifically underneath the door, and also to drain moisture to the positive exterior of the waterproofed structure. If no door pan flashing is present at the door opening, water may drain through the threshold and make its way inside the structure, resulting in structural damage. Since this crucial piece of flashing is not visible to the naked eye, a planned door replacement offers a great opportunity to inspect the Door Sill Pan Flashing.

Planning:

Homeowners considering replacing their upstairs patio doors. Should take the following factors into consideration:

1. *Is there any visible damage on the exterior portion of the door sill?*
2. *Is my balcony sliding door currently experiencing any leaks or water intrusion (check for stained carpet, base boards, wood floors or drywall)?*
3. *Should I be replacing my door with a retrofit or a new construction door unit?*
4. *Is my installer licensed and do they carry an installation warranty?*
5. *Has my installer included the proper scope of work? This should include a contingency plan should they encounter concealed damage (Rusted/Missing Door Sill Pan).*

HOA Requirements:

The Door Sill Pan is to be examined thoroughly by HOA personnel. Photographic records must be collected. Upon removal of the existing sliding door glass panels and lower track, the sill pan will be exposed for inspection by HOA personnel. Any penetrations from the old door fasteners should be sealed using compatible sealants. In the event the door sill pan is corroded or deteriorated, it must be replaced. This replacement process must be accompanied with a new decking membrane which can only be performed by the HOA's contractor.

Construction Process Expectations:

Homeowners can expect the door replacement process to run smoothly if they heed the requirements and considerations listed above. Should the existing sheet metal sill pan be found to be unserviceable, the door installation must be put on hold. Below is the sequence of events that must take place by the HOA's contractor:

1. Existing door track should be removed carefully. Installer should take precautions not to damage the Door Sill Pan with aggressive cutting and prying methods.
2. Should the Door Sill Pan prove to be unserviceable, portions of the exterior wall must be removed to allow for Door Sill Pan replacement.
3. The Door Sill Pan must be fabricated and installed.
4. A new decking membrane must be installed over the exterior horizontal portion of the pan.
5. The exterior wall cladding (siding/stucco) can then be repaired.
6. The door installation can resume by owners contractor.

