

By: *Inspector Weeks ... 613.290.3697*

We are looking into the replacement of our front door that has a glass sidelight as part of the frame. Our house was built in 1974 and it has the original metal door and wood frame. My question for you is what is the best thing to do ? My husband wants to replace the metal door and the sidelight glass individually and leave the existing frame; he thinks it would be less work. I think we should replace the whole thing, frame and all. Who is right??

Christina Wright, Chelsea.

Without entering into a discussion of who is right and who is wrong, let me give you the facts and the two of you can make a mutual decision. The current entrance way is 33 years old and is most likely not as energy efficient as it once was. Replacing it will definitely reduce drafts and help with the heating bills. The foam insulation inside the current metal door will have started to break down reducing its insulating capabilities. The thermo pane sidelight glass is thin, old technology and has minimal R value. If replaced with the current standard of Low E Argon it will definitely help. The aged weather-stripping on the door frame is most likely in need of replacement. The design of the current wood frame is quite basic and unless you have been diligent with annual maintenance, painting and caulking, it too is feeling its age. The design of the new frames is produced at a higher standard than your current door and will help with weatherproofing.

The replacement of individual components of the entrance way, glass, door and weatherstripping will help. However here is something to keep in mind. When I do an Inspection on a house I look at all the systems and how they work with each other. How does the roof work with the framing and foundation, the operation of the heating and cooling with the insulation, or the water supply system with the drainage. I remember from my renovation days combining old and new is often tricky and the results don't always work the way you hope they will.

I welcome your questions please forward them to, Inspector Weeks, c/o Peter Weeks Home Inspections PWHI@sympatico.ca or by phone at 613.290.3697. **Peter Weeks** has been a Chelsea resident for 19 years. As a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing **Residential Home Inspections** for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB. **He is a Qualified and Fully Insured Inspector.**