

City of Jacksonville Historic Preservation Commission SUMMER 2012 NEWSLETTER

Snug as a Bug! How to Seal Leaks Around Doors

Old House Journal Online has great tips for homeowners... here is an example from their August/September 2012 edition!



Caulking an exterior door helps keep out the weather—both air infiltration that leads to chills and higher energy bills, and water that can lead to moisture damage. Caulking is a straightforward DIY repair, one that needs to be periodically updated through the years. If the caulk around your exterior doors is crumbling away or exhibits breaks or gaps, it could use refreshing.

Step 1: First, collect your tools: exterior caulk, a caulk gun, 5-in-1 tool, box-cutter knife, some type of mini pry bar (we used a beekeeper's hive tool, which has a nice sharp edge), backer rod (foam cord), and a metal ruler. It also helps to have cleanup supplies at the ready: rags and water or paint thinner, depending upon your type of caulk (always follow manufacturer recommendations). We suggest using a caulk that is flexible, water-resistant, and paintable.



Step 2: Start by removing all traces of the old caulk and any backer materials. Use the pry bar to slice away the old caulk, the 5-in-1 tool to start digging out the backers, and your fingers to pull each away in lengths. You'll want the area to be as free of debris as possible before installing the new materials.



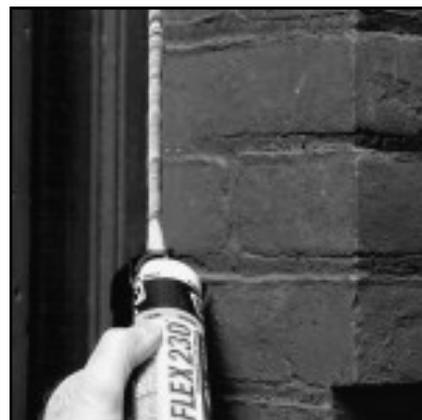
Step 3: Next, evaluate your opening: Any gaps larger than 1/4" need to be stuffed with a foam backer rod to improve the seal—caulk alone can't bridge the distance (and your new caulk will soon open up over these larger gaps if you skip this step).

Compress the foam backer rod and carefully stuff it into the space, using the 5-in-1 tool to push it to an approximately uniform distance behind the opening. (Most manufacturers recommend a 1/4" depth.) Double-check this measurement with your ruler.



Step 4: Then it's time to apply the caulk. Be careful to cut the caulk tube at a 45-degree angle (using the box cutter), and run a test bead on a piece of cardboard before beginning. If your test bead is too narrow to adequately cover the gap, you'll need to cut the tube's opening a hair larger.

Caulk slowly, and with a steady hand, aiming to create a solid bead down the length of the casing. If your gap was smaller than 1/4", the final touch is to run your finger down the bead to give it a slightly concave surface. However, caulk beads applied over a backer rod can pull away from the casing after this is done, so are better left alone.



Check out more great home improvement tips and get valuable information about preservation topics at www.oldhouseonline.com

What Style is Your House?

Second Empire/Beaux Arts (1865-1920)

Second Empire was most popular between 1865 and 1880, and so named for the "French" elements popular during the Napoleon III era of the Second French Empire, where the style originated. Quoins and elements from previously popular styles, like Gothic Revival and Italianate, are seen in Second Empire, though it is a distinct style unto itself.

In the US, Second Empire style was popular in the East and Midwest and typically combined a rectangular tower or similar element of equal or greater height as the highest floor with a steep, but short, mansard roof that gives an obvious nod to its French ancestry. The original top of the mansard roof often had iron trim or "cresting," often removed in later years. Lightning rods were sometimes integrated into the cresting, making these decorative features more utilitarian. Exterior materials were wood, brick or stone. Paired columns and sculpted details around doors, windows, and dormers are seen on more elaborate Second Empire styled buildings to give a grander and more and expensive appearance.

Floor plans for Second Empire residences could either be symmetrical, with the tower-like element in the center, or asymmetrical, with the tower to one side. Common elements include:

- Mansard roof
- Dormer windows project like eyebrows from roof
- Rounded cornices at top and base of roof
- Brackets beneath the eaves, balconies, and bay windows
- Cupola
- Patterned slate on roof
- Wrought iron cresting above upper cornice
- Classical pediments
- Paired columns
- Tall windows on first story
- Small entry porch

Windows were typically placed over an entrance, arranged in twos or threes, as a central feature. Many homes had elaborate window hoods with support brackets and layers of wood trim with incised patterns. Eyebrow shapes were used over windows, doors, and for dormers. Bay windows were also common. Second Empire entrances tended to have elaborate canopies and were elevated several steps above grade. Double doors or an extra wide single door were typical as well.

The style was used for both residential and commercial structures, often for state institutions conveying character and a sense of permanence. More elaborate examples were referred to as "a wedding cake." At its height, Second Empire influenced homeowners to remodel to incorporate mansard roofs into existing homes.



The neo-classical style of Beaux Arts architecture heavily influenced the architecture of the United States. The trend toward revivalist architecture gained momentum from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, the Columbian Exposition, that encouraged historical interpretations of European styles. Combining grand traditions of Baroque and Rococo styles with an impressionistic flavor, Beaux Arts style used bold sculptural decoration, slightly over-scaled details, rich deep cornices, and conservative modern lines. H. H. Richardson used these influences in his buildings, developing a personal style of his own. Characteristics of Beaux-Arts architecture included:

- Flat roof
- Rusticated and raised first story
- Hierarchy of spaces, from "noble spaces"—grand entrances and staircases— to utilitarian ones
- Arched windows; Arched and pedimented doors
- Classical details, ornamentation, and eclecticism
- Symmetry and balance
- Statuary, sculpture (bas-relief panels, figural sculptures, sculptural groups), murals, mosaics, and other artwork, all coordinated in theme to assert the identity of the building
- Classical elements: balustrades, pilasters, garlands, cartouches, richly detailed clasps (*agrafes*), brackets and supporting consoles
- Subtle use of multiple colors, swags and sculptural enrichments
- Marble stairways with wrought iron railings
- Coffered ceilings and figural/mural paintings

Beaux-Arts

architecture also brought a civic face to the railroad. (Chicago's Union Station and Detroit's Michigan Central Station are famous American examples of this style.)



"What Style is Your House?" was a regular feature of early HPC Newsletters; some information in these articles may have already been published or compiled from other sources like *Old House Journal* online, *Wikipedia*, and *about.com* as well as from our recent *Historic Resources Survey of the Jacksonville Historic*.