

One of the many attractions of living at Lido Shores is the quality of light that streams through our windows and sliding doors. Keeping the windows in good shape can be a challenge for us as homeowners, so before you're surprised by costly repairs, here are some tips for keeping your windows and sliders in good condition. Common problems with our windows: leaking; corrosion from the elements; or ill-fitting or inoperable windows.

Rollers are the most common point of failure in any large sliding window. They take a lot of beating compared to other parts of the window but are critical to its function. If they don't work properly, the window or door won't open and close properly and it can even go off the tracks. There are three major reasons that cause rollers to stop working:

1. **A buildup of debris** can prevent the wheels from rolling along the track.
2. **Loose screws** that keep the rollers in their proper placement can cause a sliding door to become loose or come off the track altogether.
3. **Rust** can prevent the window/slider from being able to move along the track.
4. **Wind** can cause damage to windows and doors that are not locked when storms occur. With hurricane-force winds, not only are the windows battered, but they can be pulled and torqued by rapidly changing atmospheric pressure.

Smaller windows that don't have rollers can experience the same problems, of course, but keeping the tracks clean and lubricated with silicone-based lubricant will help to keep them working well.

To keep your windows and doors clean:

1. **Vacuum the tracks to remove surface dirt.** The track should also be wiped down with a cleaning solution to prevent grime buildup. Given the humidity and salt air in Florida the tracks should be cleaned often. Compressed air can also be useful to clear the drainage holes.
2. **Tighten the sliding door roller screws.** If the screws become loose the slider will start to wiggle on the track. Most of the time you can tighten these screws yourself, or you can outsource this to a contractor who will tighten the screws under your maintenance contract.
3. **Use a silicone-based lubricant.** Contractors suggest doing this on a monthly basis to protect against the salt air and humidity. Lubrication also keeps the rollers moving smoothly along the tracks and protects against the formation of rust. It's important you use a silicone-based lubricant as opposed to other lubricants because they don't attract dirt. Rather than being sticky, this lubricant dries completely.
4. **Paint the frames if the window is pitted.** If your window doesn't need to be replaced but you want to deal with rust or salt issues, especially on the gulf side of the building, you can repaint using a dark bronze maritime paint or similar.

When to consider a contractor:

Leaks around the panes may require re-glazing. Leaks at the bottom of the sliders may require caulking. Sometimes you can do these fixes yourself, but you may also choose to engage a contractor to address these issues. There are several in the Sarasota area.

Should you need to replace a window or door, be sure to submit information about the proposed door or window to Casey Management for approval. Windows and doors must be compatible with building standards. In addition, replacement windows will need to be impact-resistant models.