

Replacing a salt shed door

THE HEAVY WOODEN DOOR would barely open on the Iowa DOT's salt shed in Cedar Rapids. Even with two men pulling it, the door wouldn't slide open easily, if at all. Meanwhile, the garage's salt dome had no door at all.

First, the Iowa DOT folks in Cedar Rapids bought a canvas door for the dome that could be raised and lowered, folding up like a roman blind. Steel rollers on the side of the canvas moved along metal tracks on the door frame.

But, the new door wasn't quite right. It wouldn't fold all the way to the top, so trucks couldn't fit through the opening.

By then Greg Callanan and

Dale Sexton, equipment operators with the Iowa DOT in Cedar Rapids, had had enough. They replaced the dome door's metal tracks with wooden ones and the steel rollers with pipes running horizontally through the canvas and sliding up and down inside the wooden tracks. Now the door rises easily all the way above the door frame, well out of trucks' way.

After taking care of the dome door, Callanan and Sexton decided to replace the original salt shed's door, too. They designed a door with a similar roman blind design and wooden tracks. They used truck tarps, fence top rail, cable, hardware, and a winch—all materials they had in the shop. The second door cost about one-quarter of the cost of the original canvas door purchased for the dome.

Now opening and closing both doors is a snap. They glide smoothly all the way to the top and are much lighter than before.

For more information about replacing your salt shed door, contact Dale Sexton, 319-364-8189. •



(top) Winch to wind door up.

(left) Salt shed door built entirely in-house.



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For more information

Read a brochure about MTKN, www.dot.state.mn.us/library/MTKN.pdf.

Bookmark MTKN's website, www.mtkn.org, so you'll be ready to go when access to TransCat becomes available in March.

For additional information, contact Hank Zaletel, Iowa DOT librarian and Iowa's representative in the MTKN, 515-239-1200, hank.zaletel@dot.state.ia.us.

Of course, you can continue to access training materials and other resources through Iowa's LTAP library. Contact Jim Hogan, 515-294-9481, hoganj@iastate.edu. The catalog is online, www.ctre.iastate.edu/library/search.cfm. •

Editor's Note: The "Replacing a Salt Shed Door" is the third in a series of several winning innovations from the 2003 "Better Mousetrap" competition at the Iowa Maintenance Training Expo. In each issue of Technology News we are highlighting one of the winners. For information about other winning "mousetraps," see CTRE's website: www.ctre.iastate.edu/ (under the "Services" category).