



M & T Glass

1380 Cyrville Rd. Ottawa, Ontario K1B 3L9
TEL: (613) 745-7158 FAX: (613) 745-5140

Sealed Unit Repair – General Information

Many types of PVC (Vinyl) and Fiberglass window sashes have semi-removable “stops” securing sealed units (see **Fig. 2 & Fig. 4**). The stops are moulded strips and also made of PVC (Vinyl) or Fiberglass and snap lock into place. In some cases they are additionally secured by glue, cement or caulking. During removal every attempt is made to preserve the old stops however breakage can occur. This the result of a combination of adhesive, wear and tear, age and, exposure to the elements. Generally when this happens, the old stop is re-used and re-secured using adhesives only. The window will remain functional. Should you want new stops, you will need to contact the manufacturer of your window to check availability.

Some of the older windows we encounter were never designed to be dismantled as the sashes were glued or “welded” together. Stops were not used, the sealed unit was locked into place by the manufacturing process itself. Surprisingly, in most cases this doesn’t mean that the sealed unit can’t be replaced! It just means that a different procedure known as a “face-off” has to be performed (see **Fig. 1**). If the face off will not work, there is another procedure called a “knock down” where the sash is cut apart at the seams to gain access to the sealed unit. Once the replacement sealed unit has been fitted into place, the pieces that have been cut out (or dismantled in a knock down) are carefully reinstalled and secured using a combination of mechanical fasteners & fillers (sealant, vinyl weld glue, caulking etc.).

No matter how much caution is exercised in the replacement of a sealed unit, it may not be invisible. Once complete you may have to perform minor carpentry work or refinish the sash.

Some window sashes that are manufactured out of aluminum (and occasionally steel) use a rubber or silicone gasket to secure the sealed unit to the sash (see **Fig. 3**). Over time exposure to the elements can cause the gasket to deteriorate. Unfortunately the condition of the gasket cannot be fully determined until sashes are dismantled. During removal some gaskets break apart while others shrink, stretch or, change shape. It is important to note that once reinstalled the old gasket seldom fits exactly as it did when new or have the identical appearance. New gasket can and will be used if the existing is pre-identified as needing replacement and it is still available. If replacement gasket is no longer available the sash will be reassembled using caulking.

