



Glass and Glazing Federation

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Re: Glazing Supply Chain Issues and Advice

Dear Homeowner,

If you are making home improvements and looking forward to getting the job done, then it can be frustrating when you have to wait longer than expected.

However, there are some very good reasons for the delays that are outside the control of the home improvement companies you employ.

The COVID pandemic has affected the supply of materials for home improvement companies. Firstly, it has clearly taken a huge toll on human health and that is the most important thing to protect. However, from a business perspective, it has had serious economic effects and affected companies in different ways; losing staff, losing suppliers and being unable to either buy or manufacture products (due to materials shortage) that pre-COVID, were readily available.

The GGF being the main trade body for the glass, glazing and fenestration sectors has received many reports of extensive delays within the supply chain. Not just in home improvement but throughout the construction industry.

Naturally, companies have to try to respond as quickly as possible to the current situation on multiple fronts. Firstly they have to protect their workers and your safety. Then they have to safeguard their business from closing altogether as they come under increasing strain from the shortage of materials as well as labour.

This of course doesn't help homeowners wanting to get work started and completed, but you should consider that many companies are struggling due to no fault of their own, during these unprecedented times.

Besides the pandemic, there are other factors are affecting homeowners and home improvement companies.

Other disruptions that have slowed down the supply of materials to make and supply home improvement products. This includes; delivery driver and fuel shortages, shipping container shortages, factory fires and the blocking of the Suez Canal.

In addition, there is currently a global shortage of many materials used for home improvement products including plastics and glass. These shortages are mainly down to the emerging markets in China and India requiring more as they develop their infrastructure and housing. The scale of the demand in these countries is enormous. The glass shortage in the UK has been primarily to the manufacturing plants closing some lines for essential repairs and maintenance. Fortunately, these are being re-opened soon.

All of the above factors have led to factory shutdowns, sharp price increases and production delays across the construction sector.

The glass and glazing sector has bounced back relatively quickly under difficult circumstances, and homeowners are continuing to invest into their properties. With the heightened supply chain awareness and knowledge COVID-19 has brought, we are in a better position to manage any future challenges that may emerge.

If you are making home improvements, the GGF offers the following advice:

- Ask the company you are employing to provide an accurate timeline as possible and if they can do their best to give you as much advance warning as possible of any delays – but please be aware that last-minute changes to their fitting schedules may sometimes be unavoidable due to the challenges highlighted above.
- Be aware that prices could fluctuate in the next 18 months as things try and settle down, so it's advisable to get prices and dates for completion established early and in your contract.
- Ask companies directly if the prices and dates they provide are achievable and also ask if they offer deposit indemnity insurance. This should give you peace of mind if you are putting down a deposit.

In the present climate, it is wise to invest in home improvements as UK property prices continue to increase and homes are being adapted in many different ways whether it be for leisure or work, however, your patience and understanding is required for what is a challenging time for all.

Yours sincerely,



John Agnew  
Group Managing Director  
Glass & Glazing Federation