

## Appliance Repair Show Transcript—August 12, 2007

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### 1997 RCA Refrigerator Has Water Leaking Onto the Floor

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We'll go to Susan, in Warren, for a question on a [refrigerator](#) with puddles on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead, Sue.

SUSAN

Well, I don't know what to do with all this [water](#). I'm getting at least a quart every couple of days, and now it's starting to come out onto my floor. I've removed the [crispers](#), and I'm just putting lots of towels in there to soak it up. I don't know what to do.

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a freezer on top?

SUSAN

The [freezer's on top](#) and it's an RCA and it's about ten years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

The problem that you're more than likely experiencing is there's a [drain tube](#) that is supposed to route the defrost drain water into a [pan](#) either mounted on top of your compressor or underneath your machine, and that's probably plugged up. Normally on

the top mounts, if you look at the ceiling of your [refrigerator](#), you might see a small cup and that's referred to as the slime cup.

SUSAN

What kind of a cup?

JOHN SOWDEN

A slime cup is what they call it, yeah, because what happens is it gets a buildup of all the dust and dirt and stuff that's in the [refrigerator](#) as you open the door as well as the defrost water, and you normally get a backup in there of debris, frozen peas, dirt and stuff.

SUSAN

Well, I just can't imagine that happening in my refrigerator!

JOHN SOWDEN

And nobody can, but it happens just opening your [door](#), it's just like your furnace filter, it collects dirt and as you open your door and use the [refrigerator](#) over a period of years debris does get inside the fridge and because of all the air movement the [fans](#) help pull it in. The debris most often then accumulates in the [drain tube assembly](#). So it's either in that cup that you have up there that collects the water and is supposed to drain down the tube, or the tube is plugged and you can clean that out with a [turkey baster](#) and some hot water. On occasion, the drain up inside the freezer section is plugged or iced over, and that would require you taking the back wall off the freezer section and getting in there and cleaning that out as well. Again, you can do that with a turkey baster and some warm water and just kind of flush out the drain.

SUSAN

And then, I can go into the slime cup with the turkey baster and use warm water?

JOHN SOWDEN

That is correct. I never should have used that term, but that's what a lot of technicians...

SUSAN

No, that's the perfect term!

JOHN SOWDEN

That's what a lot of technicians call it, because, normally, you pull it out and there's just crud in there. Everybody always wonders where it comes from, but it's just an accumulation over time.

SUSAN

Well thank you very much. I'll try that.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

It would be interesting to see how Sue makes out with that, and maybe what we should do at some point is to set up a call-in line where people can call and say that "the advice

you gave me last week, it really worked,” and find out if she did discover her slime cup. I’m going to go look for mine!

JOHN SOWDEN

Well yours might not have one!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Oh. Only the older ones, then?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, it just depends on the makeup of the [refrigerator](#). The top mounts they have a hole in the freezer ceiling and it drains into this cup and into the tube. If you have a side by side it’s a different configuration.

### **Kitchen Aid Electric Range Temperature Is Lower Than What It is Set For**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Okay. Let’s get to Linda, in South Lyon, on the Appliance Repair Show on News Talk 760 WJR.

LINDA

I have a [Kitchen Aid range](#), cooking range, the [oven](#) is not as warm as the temperature gauge says that it is. I have a little insert thing that I have put in, and the oven just isn’t heating up like it says it is. How can I adjust that, or can I?

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a gas or [electric oven](#)?

LINDA

Electric.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. And you say [it’s not heating up](#) well, it does get hot but you just think the temperature is off?

LINDA

Right, it’s about twenty-five degrees less than the readout says.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, that’s actually not too bad.

LINDA

Oh, really?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. Most of the manufacturers in their controls, especially the older units, have a twenty-five degree variance, meaning if you set your oven at three fifty, and it kept an average temperature of three twenty five, three thirty, they would consider that to be within allowable, tolerable limits of their specs on your stove. Now, the other thing to consider is, what are you measuring the temperature with? Because sometimes, the thermometer, the inexpensive ones, aren't accurate and they could be off ten or twenty degrees, so I normally recommend using a [digital thermometer](#) and you can pick one up for around twenty dollars. Those are a little more reliable and it will give you a more accurate reading than the smaller, metal ones that are just kind of a dial that go in there. Those are good to give you a basis of where you're at, but twenty-five degrees really isn't that bad. Now, on some of the...

LINDA

But, for my, for instance if I'm baking a pie, it will take a half-hour longer to cook than the cookbook says it should and so I have stuck the temperature gauge inside the [oven](#) and it's not...the readout on the oven isn't the same, it's less than. So, it just takes longer to bake it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have a digital display?

LINDA

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. On some of those models, you can adjust or calibrate the [thermostat](#) or [control board](#) up or down I think twenty-five degrees in five degree increments, and there's a procedure that you have to do in order to get into that mode. Normally, that's going to be in your [owner's manual](#), sometimes you have to hit a couple buttons at the same time, and it'll put you in a calibration mode. That way you can adjust it manually. At times, the [oven sensor](#) will lose some of its properties, and kind of be off a little bit. Normally a half hour too long is too long, and especially people who have been baking a long time, they know how long it takes for that pie to come out. The other things you can do is always just cheat it, and just set it twenty five or thirty degrees higher, and see if that gets you the results you're looking for.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

The danger in that, I would think, would be that if the oven then reads the twenty-five degrees higher, correctly, then you could have a problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it could be.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Might just be better to recalibrate the thing, and ...

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, normally trying to find out what the problem is, is the best way to go, but sometimes if ... some are calibrated some might have a service technician out, at some point, and he'll calibrate it and you might not know it, and then you'll have a power outage or something for a few days and you come back and it resets. Then all of a sudden now you're back to the factory specs, and it's not where it was, so there's a lot of things that can cause it, but normally twenty-five degrees off is not a big deal, you're not even going to notice it in baking, so I have a thought that she might even have a bigger temperature swing than that, only what she's using to measure it with might be off somewhat too.

### **1989 Amana Refrigerator Gasket Is Getting Pinched By the Crisper Drawer**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Amelia, in Livonia, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Amelia, go ahead please.

AMELIA

Yes, I have an [Amana refrigerator](#), it was purchased in 1989, and the thing that happens is, I've got it in the corner, so when I open up the [door](#) to the refrigerator I have to be careful because when I take the [crisper drawer](#) it will pinch the [gasket](#) there, and then I hear a little kind of click, now can I replace that whole gasket door and what would I do, do I have to call the repairman to have it fixed?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, a [door gasket](#) replacement is a do-it-yourselfer type job, and we actually have instructions on how to do that on our [website](#). If you get the gasket, the best way is to get the gasket, soak it in some warm to hot water, not boiling hot but tap water, then lay it out flat and let it sit if you can for a day or two. That will take out any of the wrinkles in the gasket that comes in shipping, a lot of times they fold them up and put them in a box so they have some wrinkles. And then from there, the door gasket is just retained on the door frame by a series of screws that goes all the way around the door frame itself, so normally it's just a matter of loosening the screws, and then taking the [door gasket](#) out of its old....

AMELIA

But how, I'm looking at the [refrigerator](#) right now, and it's got like a crease in there, do I open...

JOHN SOWDEN

Fold back the [door gasket](#).

AMELIA

Oh, I see! Oh man, there are a lot of them!

JOHN SOWDEN

There are a lot of screws, that's normally a quarter inch [nut driver](#) you're going to need for that. You have to loosen them. Once you get the door gasket on, the biggest problem is to try to readjust the door and get the [door](#) to close well again. You just have to work on it. The best thing is to put it on and leave all those screws loose around the door frame, and close it up against the door and you can kind of warp the door to meet the frame, and then gently open the door and tighten a few screws down and keep that procedure up until you get them all tight. But don't over-tighten them because that's a plastic liner, and if you put too much pressure on them you start cracking the liner.

AMELIA

Oh, I see! Okay, now there's a, I think its Bill and Brown or something, down on Middlebelt. If I went in there what do I need to show him to give me the right one?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, normally, to find parts for your unit you want to get a [model and serial number](#) off the unit, or if you go to [Repairclinic.com](#), the door gasket is our [item number 898](#), and it looks like that door gasket is sixty-three dollars and five cents, and we have them in stock, and we also have the tool linked to it that you're going to need, to install it.

AMELIA

Really?

JOHN SOWDEN

So you could stop in today, since we're open, in Canton, Michigan, Michigan Avenue and Beck is our location, or you could place your order and have it shipped to your door and take it on for next weekend's project.

AMELIA

Okay, what's your phone number?

JOHN SOWDEN

Its 888-343-4948, and we're open right now.

AMELIA

Okay, thank you very much!

### **1996 Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Not Completing the Cycle**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Let's go to Donna, in Commerce Township, with a [Kitchen Aid dishwasher](#) that does not completely cycle. Good morning, Donna.

DONNA

I purchased the [dishwasher](#) in 1996, and it [does not appear to complete the cycle](#), even though when I watch the red button on the cycle monitor it will go to each cycle. At the end of the cycle, with the clean green light lit, there's still water in the bottom of the

dishwasher. I can push the cancel button and it will drain. We had a service technician out and he said that the [control board](#) was bad. We picked up a new control board from your location and installed it, and I'm still having the same problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it's not draining all the way at certain points of the cycle. That could be a control board, but it sounds like we've found out that it's not a [control board](#). Generally, getting a new one out of the box and it being bad is a real slim chance, so I would say you have a problem with the drain. It's either the [motor's](#) not pumping out the water, or you have a restricted [drain hose](#) that goes from the [dishwasher](#) to your [air gap](#) or your garbage disposal that's not allowing it.

DONNA

Yeah, we did release that, and looked through that, and that appears not to be the problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, well on a lot of these units, especially the newer ones, they've got inside the [pump](#) assembly a series of filter screens and flappers and stuff like that that channel the water so that as the [dishwasher's](#) running, it will push a lot of the debris off to one side, and then when it goes to drain, it will catch the stuff off the dishes and push it out the drain. It's possible that something internally in that pump is not working, and causing it to build up the water. It's... what happens is the dishwasher is on a time fill and a timed drain, so if it runs for two or three minutes in the drain cycle and there's something restricted or something internally in that [pump](#) is not actuating properly, [it's not going to get all the water out](#). So, at the end of the cycle, you have a buildup of three or four fills and drains, and you also have normally [dirtier dishes](#) because you're re-circulating a lot of that stuff. Now you said you had somebody out—I would call him back out. Most places will warranty their diagnosis, and come back out and have another look at it. I would start in the pump assembly.

DONNA

Okay. Thank you.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

I didn't realize that most places would do that. Like reputable places will come out again if they make the wrong diagnosis, come back and try to get it right?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, sure. Normally, it's thirty-day, ninety-day, whatever their policy is, but everybody makes mistakes, and sometimes there's another thing wrong with the machine. You fix one problem and find something else.

## **2002 Dehumidifier No Longer Working and Icing Up**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

It's kind of like a person! That's why you want to make sure the diagnosis is correct. Let's get right back to the phones with Harold, in Lyon Township, on the News Talk Radio WJR Appliance Repair Show, sponsored by [RepairClinic.com](http://RepairClinic.com). Hi, Harold.

HAROLD

My question is concerning a [dehumidifier](#), and it's a little over five years old. I've had it in my basement, to kind of augment along with our central air conditioning, but it stopped working properly earlier this season. [It would ice up](#). I took the cover off, and it was iced up, and I thawed it, then I plugged it back in again, and now the [fan](#) runs only and the compressor will click on for a few seconds and then it will stop. So the compressor does not run continuously anymore.

JOHN SOWDEN

It sounds kind of terminal.

HAROLD

Oh, really?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. Normally what happens is the compressor turning on and off like that means either the compressor is stuck mechanically, or electrically the windings have burned out and failed, and normally that's... what sounds like the scenario you've had is after the icing up factor is normally a leak in the system, and it sounds like it had a small leak over time and now most of the refrigerant is probably gone, the compressor is trying to compress whatever it's pulled into the system, like air and all the other impurities it's not supposed to have in the system, and it's locked up the compressor. Now, you can check the compressor windings, and we do have instructions on how to do that on our [website](#). You can use an [ohmmeter](#) to see if they're shorted or grounded. But generally from what you described, it's a failed compressor, and given the cost of replacement, it's much more inexpensive to go ahead and get a new machine.

HAROLD

Yeah, I think this is a forty pint and I think they run around, you know you can get one for one hundred fifty, one hundred sixty, one hundred seventy, something like that. I checked all the wire connections; I took it outside the cabinet, but okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news for you this morning, Harold. At times that's what happens.

### **Kitchen Aid Double Oven Door Won't Close**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And, we'll go to Eric, in Grosse Pointe, who has a [Kitchen Aid double oven](#) on the Appliance Repair Show. Eric, what's the problem with your oven?

ERIC

We have a double [oven](#), you know the kind that are stacked, and the bottom [door won't close](#) all the way all the time, so the light stays on and also the bottom won't lock when the [door's](#) not completely shut. So my wife has figured out, she pushes the chair against it, it'll lock, it will solve the problem while she's baking, but it's not a good permanent solution.

JOHN SOWDEN

No, it's not, and normally the reason that the door will not close is either the [door hinges](#) are warped or sprung, or the [inner door panel](#) could be warped. If somebody has fallen on the oven door when it was open, small children are good culprits for that type of thing; they use it to climb up into the cupboards next to it to get to the Cheerio cabinet. So I would look at the hinges, so it sounds like when it closes it's not snapping the door shut.

ERIC

Exactly.

JOHN SOWDEN

It could be just the [door springs](#) could have failed, or again, sometimes the springs are okay but the actual inner liner is bent, and it won't allow it to make the [door switch](#). You can pull the oven door off and then have a look and see what the springs look like, and if you have any questions I would just put another set of door springs on it as a starting point.

ERIC

Okay, you can get those on the [website](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure can, just get the [model number](#) off your unit, usually on those it's either going to be as you open the door on a metal tag on the side of the trim of the [oven](#), or if you open up the bottom oven [door](#) it's going to be at the base, they kind of hide them on some of those wall ones and makes it hard.

ERIC

Well, actually I've used your [website](#) to get some replacement [glass](#) for the upper oven, so I've actually pulled that door apart.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you're pretty well versed then, on tearing the [doors](#) apart and putting them back together.

ERIC

So you're telling me I should take the inner panel off, take a look at the [hinges](#) and the springs, and see if the [springs](#) look intact and also if the hinges are warped or bent?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and sometimes on those it's hard to tell, you have to almost put it on the machine with the weight of the door, and process of elimination, if it doesn't close right and everything else looks to be okay, the pins that it mounts to on the frame look all right, then it's just generally time for a new [door](#). The other thing it could be is if you change the [door gasket](#), they come a lot springier, as you use it over time it can compress the door frame, so a lot of times when you change the door gasket I would tell people to lock the door and put it through a self-clean and kind of forms it to the door and makes it so it's...

ERIC

Yeah, the gasket doesn't seem to be the culprit here, because it will sit a little bit ajar even without compressing the [gasket](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, yeah I'd start with the [hinges](#) and it sounds like you're well versed in taking the doors on and off that unit.

### **1997 Kenmore Dishwasher Dead and Full of Water, Thermal Fuse Was Replaced and Is Blown Again**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

This is the Appliance Repair Show here on News Talk 760 WJR. Jeff's in his car, well he doesn't have his ten-year-old [Kenmore dishwasher](#) with him but that's his problem here on the Appliance Repair Show. Jeff, what's going on?

JEFF

Yes, the problem I'm having is I have this [dishwasher](#); it's a Kenmore, model 665. I've had it for a little less than ten years.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, 665, that's generally built by Whirlpool. What's the problem you're having?

JEFF

Well, the symptom is the same, we've had it a couple times now where we find the dishwasher with the [display dead](#), no lights on, nothing happening, and the [dishwasher's full of water](#). Usually it happens, both times, when we've had a pretty bad electrical storm, but we called the repairman and he came out and said it was a [thermal fuse](#). Replaced it, now this is the second time I'm aware of it and after doing some research on the web and find out that this is pretty common problem with this washer, and I take out the thermal fuse and I checked it and it's blown again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. Normally, you want to look at the [door switches](#) at that point and make sure that those are working, and/or the [heater](#) and the [thermostats](#) that cycle them on and off are not sticking at times for the heat cycle, either one can cause the repetitive fuse failure.

JEFF

I guess my question is, is this defect or a weakness in the design of the product, is there anything new available, a different [thermal fuse](#), or is there something I can do to protect this washer from this happening again?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, I don't know if it's a defect or not, sometimes like I said after a period of time the door switches can start to stick, and cause it to fail. The fuses, that's one up in the [control panel](#), correct?

JEFF

That's right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and the other thing is you might want to check is the [heater](#) and see if it's not the problem. Normally, when you go to heat the water there's a series of [thermostats](#) underneath the tank. All one has to do is stick once and cause the unit to overheat and it takes out the [fuse](#), so an intermittent problem like that, I would start by looking at the [door switches](#) making sure they're okay, and then looking at the heater. If you go to our [website](#) and put the [model number](#) in, the heater may come as a kit, which comes with new thermostats and stuff, they see that they're having problems they'll go ahead and put the other components in that they feel will make it continue to work.

JEFF

Okay, that's what I'll do then.

### **Tappan Electric Range Three Burners Will Not Turn On Unless the Left Rear Burner Is On**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Frank, in Garden City, you're next here on the Appliance Repair Show on News Talk 760 WJR.

FRANK

Okay, I have a [Tappan electric range](#). Three of the [burners will not turn on](#). If I turn on the left rear [burner](#), all four of them work.

JOHN SOWDEN

Wow. Is this a smooth top or a standard conventional?

FRANK

Standard conventional one.

JOHN SOWDEN

It sounds like you have, either a wiring problem, or you've got some [switches](#) that have failed, and then when you turn on the one switch you're actually feeding power into the other [burners](#).

FRANK

Apparently, yes, how do you correct that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, you have to figure out which switch or switches have failed, and the way to do that is to use an [ohmmeter](#) and check the switch itself and see that when you turn it to on that you have the proper continuity between the proper contacts with the switch.

FRANK

I've taken off the back and it's just a mass of wires back there.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, it is.

FRANK

I'm not so sure if I'm that good, to be able to do that or not. I'm just wondering if I should just call a repairman and get that fixed. I can use the [stove](#) as long as I just flick on that one switch that's the left rear, and all three of them work, and that's what I've been doing, but I was just wondering that could be easily replaced and just sort of a plug-in type thing, and have the thing work the way it's supposed to.

JOHN SOWDEN

On electrical problems like that there's no silver bullet. You have to find out what is failing and then replace it. I would say you, it could be just a wiring problem, some wires that are burnt or melted together. I would suspect you have a few [switches](#) that have failed, and yeah, at this point, I would probably call somebody out. Or, start cooking bigger meals if you have to use all four burners.

FRANK

Well, what happens is, if I turn on left rear I can just use any one of the other [burners](#), so I just barely turn it on so it's between simmer and off, and if I need the big burner then I use that, but I thought eventually I should get the thing fixed.

JOHN SOWDEN

You should, and using it that way, you could be causing other electrical problems in the machine by kind of forcing it to work that way, so yeah, I'd schedule a service call and have somebody out to get to the bottom of that and get you back on track.

FRANK

Okay, thank you!

## 1985 Montgomery Ward Gas Dryer Not Heating

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Bill, in your car, you're next with a [Montgomery Ward dryer](#) on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead, Bill.

BILL

What happens is, I turn the [dryer](#) on, and it will come on and the [igniter](#) lights and the fire comes on, and then it goes off after about five, maybe five to ten minutes. Then we open the door, and it will cool and down and start again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Is it not, when you do a load of laundry, let's say you put it in for an hour, is it drying the clothes, or...

BILL

No, it's not. If you put it in for an hour and don't open it then the [clothes are just barely dry](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, well I'm assuming from your description that it's a gas [dryer](#) that we're speaking of here.

BILL

It's a gas dryer, correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. What happens a lot of times is the [coils](#) on the [gas valve](#) will fire the first or second time that the [dryer](#) will start up, and then as it gets working, they actually get heated up and fail. Then if you let it sit for a while they cool down and start to work again. So from what you're describing, I would suspect the [gas valve solenoid coils](#) are intermittent and causing your dryer to fail. Now the other thing to always check is the vent, make sure it's clean because that causes air to back up and the thing to short cycle too. If you have that white plastic venting, go get some metal [venting](#), it's going to help contain the fire. Start with all the obvious things that you can upgrade or look at, and then from there from what you describe you probably have an intermittent gas valve but more commonly the coils themselves are failing.

BILL

Okay, now can I get the numbers to an appliance repair place and they can get me a part?

JOHN SOWDEN

You certainly can. You can try our website, [Repairclinic.com](#), or you can give us a call with the [model number](#) as it reads off the machine, and that's 888-343-4948, and we have people standing by right now on a Sunday morning, ready to take your call.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

I just did the math, accounting mind that I have. Twenty-two years old, that's pretty good.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, if that's the only problem he's had with that, not a bad track record.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

No, I would say not, although [Montgomery Ward](#) didn't have such a good track record, the store anyway, but some of their appliances...

JOHN SOWDEN

Their appliances were built by all the other major manufacturers.

### **Frigidaire Refrigerator Too Warm but the Freezer Temperature Is Fine**

JOHN SOWDEN

We're going to go to Kathleen, in White Lake. Good morning!

KATHLEEN

Good morning! I have a [Frigidaire refrigerator](#) that's giving me a problem. The freezer works fine, the [refrigerator is too warm](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

And, is this a problem has occurred slowly over time, or did it just kind of happen over night?

KATHLEEN

It kind of happened overnight.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, and everything else is running, and you say the freezer works fine, do you have any idea what the [temperature in the freezer](#) is?

KATHLEEN

It's about zero.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, okay, so that's cold enough. The reason I ask is that at times people think the freezer is working okay because the ice cubes are frozen, but it only needs to be thirty, thirty two degrees to do that. Do you have any idea what we have inside the [refrigerator](#)?

KATHLEEN

Sixty-three.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay! It sounds like you have a defrost system failure. What's happening is the air from the freezer is not being allowed to be pushed into the [refrigerator](#) section because the coil that's trying to push the air through is covered in frost. The other thing that could cause that is the [fan](#) itself in the freezer is failing, so if you open the freezer door you should hear a [fan motor](#) running.

KATHLEEN

Okay, I'll check.

JOHN SOWDEN

And if not, then I would suspect something in the defrost system. That coil is located behind the back wall of your freezer. If you open up your refrigerator door, the [controls](#) on your unit are in the ceiling, and in the center of that there's what they call the [defrost timer](#). If you look up in there you'll see a small hole with what looks like a little dial in it. You can take a [flat blade screwdriver](#) and put it into that little wheel or little plastic dial and turn it until the machine shuts off, and then what you've done is put it into defrost. It should, by itself, go out of defrost after twenty or thirty minutes, and if it doesn't, that's a sign that the timer is not advancing and that would be your problem. But, it also could be a failed [defrost heater](#), or a [defrost thermostat](#) which they have to make sure it doesn't overheat your freezer section. Normally when you have one section working and the other one not, it's not getting the cold air from the freezer into the [refrigerator](#) and it's either a [fan](#), or the airflow's obstructed, and that's generally from a frost buildup.

KATHLEEN

Okay, so I can do that? Last weekend I turned the refrigerator off and let it sit for twenty-four hours like I saw on your [website](#). Then I turned it back on and it was still ... so. I just need to check that [timer](#) thing?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, and turning it off, sometimes if it's really frosted over you have to let it sit for two or three days, maybe longer, to let it completely melt all the frost and ice out. Normally when that happens, you'll find water underneath the [refrigerator](#) because there's so much that it overflows the [pan](#) that it's supposed to drain into. The easiest way to do it is turn it off for a few days, if you turn it back on and it starts working fine, you know you have a defrost problem and it's just a matter of figuring out which component has failed. Or, some people just replace all the components in the defrost system and start over, it's still cheaper than making a few trips to the store and buying new food every week or two with the spoiled milk and all the other stuff.

### **Amana Electric Range Oven Bake Element Not Working When Set To Bake**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And, we'll go now to Don, who has an [Amana electric range](#) that's giving him problems. Don's in Sandusky, good morning, Don. What is your problem?

DON

My oven, the [oven doesn't work](#) but I've checked it for continuity and that seems to be good, but the boiler part works.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, so you say you checked the [oven element](#) for continuity, and did you take the wires off the element when you checked it?

DON

Yes, I did.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, because otherwise you get a reading of the rest of the circuit.

DON

That model has a [chip board](#) in it or whatever you want to call it. I'm wondering if that's bad because sometimes my oven lock light will come on when it's not locked, with the lever you know?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and you say the broil does work? And the [element](#) is good.

DON

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

And the display and everything when you set it to bake that seems like it's going through the motions?

DON

No, it doesn't, it doesn't even come on, the [oven](#) part.

JOHN SOWDEN

You don't get a display?

DON

Nope.

JOHN SOWDEN

So the [clock](#) itself, when you, you can't set it to three fifty or...?

DON

Yeah, when you set it to three fifty, no lights come on like for the [oven](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, so you're not getting the on light and all that good stuff. Yeah, it sounds like you might have a [control board](#) failure from what you're describing.

DON

When I turn it on broil, the oven [light](#) will come on.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, there are two separate sections of the board that they use for that, and basically from what you're describing I would suspect that you have a bad [control board](#). The first thing you want to do, though, is make sure all the wiring to the control board is secure, there's no burnt wires, and that the ribbon connector from the [touch pad](#) is securely pushed in there. That way you know you have good connections, because it could be just not reading that you're pushing the bake button.

DON

Yeah, well it's a [knob](#), you know, a knob you turn, it's not like a push button thing.

JOHN SOWDEN

The range [control board](#) for your unit is one hundred fifty one dollars and forty-five cents, so it's, it depends on the age of the [stove](#) and everything, but these are not uncommon things to fail. It's just like putting the [thermostat](#) in your stove twenty years ago, it just happens.

DON

Yeah, I got this stove for like twenty dollars, other than that it works good. It's a smooth top, but when I first got it, if I wiggled the [knob](#) it would come on sometimes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ah. Okay. Yeah, so now it's time to make your decision on how you want to go about it.

### **GE Gas Range Oven Not Lighting**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We're going to Anne, in Warren, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead, Anne.

ANNE

I have a [GE stove](#), XL44. It has an electronic ignition. The four burners and the [oven went out](#), and about four months ago, I lit the four [burners](#), that worked okay, but I have no idea how to light the [oven](#), or where that unit is, to put the long match to light it. The floor of the oven has two openings on each side; they're about an inch by six, two on each side of the floor of the oven. Now I don't know where the unit would be to put the lit match.

JOHN SOWDEN

You say the oven, the surface [burners](#) quit sparking and clicking when you go to light them?

ANNE

They're working okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, they're working okay, but now the [oven](#) does not light?

ANNE

Correct. I didn't try to light it, so I don't know where the unit is to try to light it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you cannot light this with a match. These are ignited by an electrical circuit, and there's nothing, there's no pilot light or anything down there that you could physically light.

ANNE

Oh, I see.

JOHN SOWDEN

From what you're describing, I would suspect the oven [igniter](#) has failed. That's a fairly common problem, if you get the [model number](#) complete as it reads off the unit, XL44 is a style of unit [GE](#) makes, but to get the correct parts we're going to need the information right off the model tag on your machine, if you go to our [website](#) and put that information in, you'll see a picture of the [igniter](#) and to get at it you do have to remove the oven floor, which pulls up, sometimes with a few locking tabs at the back, in order to get in there and access the igniter. But from what you're describing, there's no match light like a lot of the older units, it's an electrical thing that you're going to have to get repaired.