

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—September 9, 2007

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1997 Sub-Zero Bottom Mount Refrigerator, Model 650, Condenser Light Keeps Coming On

JOHN SOWDEN

We've got Jim, in his car; he has a question about a [Sub-Zero refrigerator](#), so good morning, Jim.

JIM

I have a Sub-Zero refrigerator, that's probably ten years old. It's a 650 model with the [freezer on the bottom](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

JIM

And we've had some problems with it, but overall it's been a pretty good [refrigerator](#). My vacuum condenser light keeps coming on, and I know how to vacuum my condenser, a gentleman showed me how to do it. I vacuumed and cleaned it up, and it kept coming on, so I called the [Sub-Zero](#) repairman. He came out, and he replaced my evaporator...

JOHN SOWDEN

Evaporator. He replaced your evaporator. Yeah, you had a leak in the system.

JIM

He replaced it, and the same thing occurred again. The light kept coming on. I called him again and he came back out, checked his gauges, and said he felt that everything was fine. Then the same thing occurred again, that the [light](#) keeps coming on. So then I reset it, I turned the [refrigerator](#) off because they said if that happens reset it. I did that twice, I reset it, it didn't come on for a while, and then about two hours later it came back on.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. What that is, that's a failsafe light in the system, and "vacuum your condenser" is kind of a [fault code](#). Normally what happens is, it senses that [it's not cooling properly](#), and one of the most common problems when that happens is that the condenser is dirty, especially in the built-in like you have with everything up on top, a lot of people forget it's up there. You have to remove the panel and get up there and vacuum that out. So really, any not-cooling problem is triggered to send the "vacuum condenser" fault code. So if the condenser is clean, and on those it helps to vacuum them out, but you sometimes have to blow them out with compressed air because they might get plugged internally where the face of it might look like it's clean, but there's no airflow coming through the condenser. The other thing to look at is the [condenser fan blade](#) on that, if it's a plastic one sometimes, as the condenser overheats, they won't turn in conjunction with the [motor](#) so that could be stripped out. Or, the condenser fan motor will sometimes stall or quit. But if all the fans are running and everything else is working, I would still lean toward the sealed system problem that you had. You might still have a leak, you might have a slight over-charge, and there could be something that's causing it to still sense that [it's not cooling](#) well. Are you experiencing any temperature problems in the box?

JIM

The temperature seems to be remaining constant. But it does seem to run quite a bit though. It seems to run a lot. Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, the fans up there run a lot, so people often think the machine's running in terms of the compressor and stuff, a lot of times the [condenser fan](#) is what you're hearing.

JIM

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

I would start by just making sure that the condenser part is completely clean. A lot of times you can take a towel, get it wet and put it over the face of the condenser and use some compressed air and blow it out from the other side, so that will keep the dust from going out all over your nice kitchen.

JIM

That's a good suggestion. I'm going to call them back and have them do that.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, make sure they clean that all out. If you still have problems, it could be in the electrical, as far as the [board](#) is just sensing something that's not there, but usually the vacuum condenser is kind of like the check engine light on your car, where it could be a whole host of other things. But I'd start there, clean it out and see what happens.

Refrigerator Icemaker on Well Water Trying to Locate a Pressurized Water Tank

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Now we have, let's see, the well water with the [icemaker](#) problem. I've wondered about that, and Don, in Toledo, Ohio, wants to know about it, so Don, go ahead please. You're on the Appliance Repair Show.

DON

Like he said, I have a [refrigerator/freezer](#) with an icemaker. We've never used it, we've never even hooked it up because we know our well water would just clog it and it wouldn't work and the ice quality would not be good. So I'm wondering if you know anyone who can provide or produces portable pressurized [water tanks](#), like a five gallon tank or something that I can fill with bottled water and hand-pump for pressure or electric pump for pressure, just to have twenty pounds of pressure or whatever it takes do drive that [icemaker](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Or, you could put a reverse osmosis system on and clean the water really well. But you do have to have a holding tank for that; normally they have a small tank. The problem you run into with that is the one you pointed out, you don't have enough water pressure. They do make a pump system that you can install on that, but they're like four or five hundred bucks to have that.

DON

Yeah, I'm looking for just a tank that I can pump by hand to add pressure, something inexpensive like that, so I can hook it up myself. But I haven't been able to find it anywhere—on the Internet, well places—you know, I've Googled it and I can't find any pressurized tanks that you can pump or plug in and adjust the pressure for.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I'm not aware of anything.

DON

Even RV stores, like camping and RV places. I'm figuring that an RV would have something like that for when they're out on the road and I just can't find it.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'm not familiar with anything for that application. The only thing I know that you have to have is, you need at least eighteen pounds of pressure on that [valve](#) or it sticks open. That's why a lot of manufacturers will tell you if you hook it up to a reverse osmosis system, you need to incorporate the pump, because what happens is the [water valve](#) sticks

open and then you have a real mess on your hands. It sounds like, I'm sorry I can't be any help here, but you've got a unique situation, and obviously I can understand why you don't want to spend the money on a pump just for the ice. The other thing you could do is, I don't know how bad the well water is, but you could put a decent [filter](#) system on it, and it would probably be okay, you still might have some cloudy cubes, and it might reduce the life of the water valve and the [icemaker](#) itself, from all the hardness and impurities, after a while it gets hard for the ice to get released from the icemaker mold. But there are plenty of places out there that have them hooked up to the well and just, they have more [icemaker problems](#) probably than anybody else, but overall I don't know of any particular remote tank system that would help you out in that case.

DON

Okay, well you've answered my question and it might be just impossible.

GE Oven Shuts Off Before It Reaches the Set Temperature

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

John Sowden is here and he's full of information, and he wants to share it with you and with Ed, in Livonia, on the Appliance Repair Show on News Talk 760 WJR. Good morning, Ed!

ED

I have a [GE self-cleaning oven](#), and whenever we turn on the oven itself, for the bake...

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a wall oven, or just a freestanding stove?

ED

It's a [freestanding stove](#). But it has, like when I turn on the thing to bake and I'll put it to 350 degrees, it starts off at 75 degrees, you know, and then it just [shuts completely down](#). Would that be something with the [electronics](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

When you set it to bake, do you have a little [knob](#) that you turn to set the temperature?

ED

Yeah, exactly.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it won't go beyond 75 degrees? Well what happens is you set it at 350...

ED

It will go up to 75, but I just did it now and it just completely shuts off.

JOHN SOWDEN

So, it says 75 degrees is normally where the starting point is, and after that it just never goes...

ED

Yeah, I just did it now and the thing just went off.

JOHN SOWDEN

It sounds like the [main electronic control](#) might have failed or is failing. But, you also want to make sure that all the connections on that board are correct before you replace it. You could just have a bad connection. What happens is, you set it at 350 degrees and then you select bake or whatever, and it shows 75 degrees, and as the oven starts to heat, it should register it until it hits the 350 degrees and starts beeping.

ED

The [oven's](#) not even coming on.

JOHN SOWDEN

So nothing, it just goes to that and drops out?

ED

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Generally from what you're describing, it sounds like the [control board](#) is failing.

ED

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can take the model number off the machine, and go to our website RepairClinic.com and enter in your [model number](#), and you can get a price on the board as well as see a picture of all the other common components for your machine.

1997 Kenmore Side-by-Side Refrigerator Temperature Is Erratic

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

Here's Joe, in Lordstown, Ohio, who's got a two-part call, we'll call it that. Good morning, Joe, and welcome.

JOE

I have a question and a comment. First, my question is, I have a [Kenmore side by side refrigerator](#), approximately ten years old. Everything in my [refrigerator](#) is freezing, and as I turn the temperature controls down, it's almost like the refrigerator shuts off, and everything on both sides start to thaw. I adjust my [control](#) to be between the refrigerator and the freezer, it doesn't seem to have much of an effect on it, so I either have everything in the refrigerator freeze, or everything in the refrigerator thaw.

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends on what kind of [refrigerator](#) you have. A Kenmore could be just about anything. Your refrigerator could be built by Whirlpool, GE, or Frigidaire, as there's a lot of manufacturers that build for the Kenmore name. So, not knowing that, it's hard to say exactly what you have without knowing what kind of control system you have. Most have what they call a [damper control](#) that allows the cold air from the freezer section into the refrigerator section. If that's failing or sticking, you will get erratic temperatures. I'd recommend if you get the [model](#) off the machine you could send us an email at Repairclinic.com. Give a detailed description of the problems you're having and we can research that and try to give you some more pointed advice on that.

JOE

Do I have a [defrost thermostat](#) in my freezer side that could be going bad, or a bi-metal thermostat that also could be failing?

JOHN SOWDEN

The defrost thermostat is made to simply terminate the defrost cycle. If that was failing, what you would have is a lot of frost and ice in the freezer coil and the machine would basically after three or four days of running and building up that frost, the whole thing would just shut down. Turning it on and off again, without letting it defrost for two or three days, or getting in there with a hair dryer and removing that frost the machine would still just not run. If you're getting big temperature swings but it is able to cool at times at the proper temperature, at least in the freezer, I would lean more towards the air distribution channels into the [refrigerator](#), which normally goes through a [damper control](#). It just senses the temperature in the refrigerator and opens the gate to allow in more or less cold air into the refrigerator.

JOE

Are those controls within the refrigerator side or behind the panel in the freezer?

JOHN SOWDEN

Most often they're in the control section of your [refrigerator](#), in the back wall normally at the top. It's just that, some are mechanical, where there's actually a little motor that opens and closes them and others are temperature actuated that open a little gate to allow cold air in there.

Suggestion for Previous Caller Related to a Well Water Pressurized Tank

JOE

All right, well thank you, I also have one comment about the gentleman who called earlier about the well water and the [icemaker](#). I did install a reverse osmosis system, and it has a bladder type tank that's attached to my system to give me pressure, and you don't have to pressurize it. I think it has a bladder in the tank so it gives out a constant pressure. And my icemaker works absolutely wonderful off of the reverse osmosis system. It was way less than the four or five hundred dollars, what he was looking for.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you put in a bladder tank with the reverse osmosis rather than just a standard storage tank. Most of them, you obviously get your choice, but most of them just come with a standard holding tank for that. Yeah, reverse osmosis system itself is very expensive as far as the filtered water goes, you could probably replace a few [icemakers](#) over a period of time before it would be the same as buying a reverse osmosis machine. But I appreciate your comments on that, and hopefully he's still listening!

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

Yeah, and hopefully you'll get the [serial number](#) from your refrigerator and go to the [Repairclinic.com](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, we can help you out a little more.

2005 Admiral Washing Machine, Model LNC6762B71, No Longer Pumping the Water Out

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

And here's a question, our first washer question of the day from Bill, in Detroit, on News Talk 760 WJR.

BILL

I have a little problem here with my [Admiral Capacity Plus clothes washer](#). I was told that it's got, it's called a gravity feed [water pump](#). I'm not really sure what that is, but that's what I was told.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

BILL

And, I've been trying to find a part number to replace it, and I haven't been able to, I've called [Admiral](#), and haven't been able to get through to get a part number. It seems like the big problem is the identification of what series it belongs to. They've got series 200 and 300 and all that stuff, but...

JOHN SOWDEN

How old is the [washing machine](#)?

BILL

It's about two years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it's a standard top-loading washing machine? And you just need a [pump](#) for it?

BILL

That's what I think.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, well it's [not pumping the water out](#)?

BILL

Right...

JOHN SOWDEN

So the [motor](#) runs and it starts to spin, it just won't pump the water out?

BILL

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Most of those, there's only two or three different [pumps](#) that they use. They have one called a high-volume pump, and that is made for people who try to push the water above six feet, where sometimes the drain is actually higher in the basement.

BILL

Well, the drain is very close...

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, so it's probably just the standard pump, along the control panel, or if you lift the lid there should be a sticker that has the [model and serial number](#).

BILL

Well I've got the model number. Would you like the model number?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah what's the model?

BILL

Its model [LNC6762B71](#) and then it says rev 20.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. That's a [Montgomery Ward](#) unit, isn't it?

BILL

I don't think so, no. It's an Admiral, and Sears has got two [pumps](#), one's for Series 10 and one's for Series 20, but I have no idea which one is which, and I can't identify the series for this particular machine.

JOHN SOWDEN

That, the [model number](#) you've provided contains the sequence generally found in a lot of what they used in the [Montgomery Ward](#) brand; we might have to dig into some of the books or microfiche.

BILL

Well, Montgomery Ward hasn't been in business for quite some time! It's a fairly new [washer](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, what I'd recommend, can you give us a call at 888-343-4948? We'll have one of the call center people see if they can dig that out. You can either call or you can send us an email with your request, and we'll try to find that model, but as far as the [pump](#) goes, there's really only one or two that they commonly use for that, and for some reason if this [model](#) doesn't come up, it's skipped in the books or the CD-ROM's they put out for that, you can just go to our [website](#) and type in Admiral washer pump and you'll see a picture of all the [Admiral washer pumps](#) and you can match it up that way.

BILL

Oh, okay. I've got a suggestion for the gentleman that had the problem with the [icemaker](#) type thing. Ice trays are real cheap, and those little plastic ones you just put in the freezer will work.

1994 GE Refrigerator, Model TFH24PRSB, Icemaker Dispenser No Longer Dispensing Ice

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

That's the McCulloch solution, Bill. Thanks for sharing that. I was going to say something about it but then I thought, no, I won't do that. We'll start out this segment with an [icemaker](#) question from Joe, in Warren, on News Talk 760 WJR. Good morning, Joe.

JOE

I have a [GE refrigerator](#) that's thirteen years old, [side by side](#), model [TFH24PRSB](#). The icemaker makes the ice, [but it doesn't dispense](#) them.

JOHN SOWDEN

It doesn't dispense crushed or cubed?

JOE

In any form, doesn't dispense them.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. And when you push your glass in there, do you hear anything happen when you try to get the ice out.

JOE

Not any more. One time I heard a click. And then that's all.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well there's an [auger motor](#) in there, that's mounted in the rear freezer. What happens when you push your glass in there, two things happen, one is it turns on the auger motor, and then depending on whether you select ice cubes or crushed ice, that click is a solenoid that you hear in the back that actually pulls up and engages or disengages the cutting blades in the [dispenser](#), so that's how you shift it from one to the other. If you're getting nothing, the first thing I would suggest is take out the [ice bucket](#), empty it out, and just let it sit in the sink overnight and make sure it's not frozen, it's not physically unable to turn because there's an ice buildup in the front of the dispensing mechanism. And make sure you can turn that auger freely after you get rid of it. If that doesn't work, or if it's turning freely, then it's in the drive system, and I would lean toward the [auger motor](#) failing. You'll have to tear out the rear wall of the freezer section in order to gain access to that, there's normally several screws on the back wall, and that back panel comes out.

JOE

The whole panel comes out?

JOHN SOWDEN

Exactly. So, the hard part about working on those is, the freezer section is pretty skinny, I guess, and it's hard to get in there because you can't get your shoulders in, you have to lean, turn one way or the other, to stick your hand in there and turn the screwdriver. It's always a little more fun to try to access that, but this is a somewhat entry-level do-it-yourselfer job, you just have to spend a little time on it. Normally, if you hear nothing, though, it's because either the ice is unable to move because the [auger](#) is frozen up, or the auger motor itself has failed.

JOE

All right then. Do you have time for another one?

JOHN SOWDEN

Is it a quick one?

1997 GE Oven Clock Control No Longer Works and Oven Will No Longer Light

JOE

Yes, on a [GE oven](#), a self-cleaning one. Its ten years old, and the oven [control clock and timer](#)—that light went out and the [oven will not light up now](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

You have no display on the control board?

JOE

That's right. One day it worked, the next day it didn't. The [surface burners](#) all work fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

It sounds like you either have a [bad clock or control board](#), they're normally all one unit, or you're not getting power to it. So, I'd make sure all the connections are good to the control board, and see if you're getting voltage to it. Basically, those are what they call power-in, power-out, where if you're getting power to that board and you have no display, the board has failed. If you get the [model number](#) off that and go to [Repairclinic.com](#) and put the model number for the range in to our website, you'll get an idea what the cost of a new control is for that.

JOE

Is that much of a job to get at?

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally not. There are a few screws in the [control panel](#) to access that. But obviously, you want to slide it out and unplug the [stove](#) first.

JOE

All right. Thank you.

Refrigerator Has a Bad Odor Even After Thorough Cleaning

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

We go now to Sherry, in Royal Oak, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi, Sherry.

SHERRY

The [refrigerator](#) is in the garage, the second one, and my husband in error unplugged it, everything inside it defrosted, including a bag of fish. The smell is horrendous; I've cleaned it with baking soda, washed it out with bleach, and went on the Internet to find out what to do. I mean it's clean, it works, but it smells.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. Sometimes that short of replacing some of the insulation package inside there, there's not much you can do. If when it turned off a lot of that stuff ran into the floor of the freezer and into the air ducts and into the starter foam underneath, you probably will have to pull what they call the divider block, the part that divides your freezer and [refrigerator](#) section, it's normally a big Styrofoam block, and either clean or replace that. The other thing I've had people do is you can take charcoal, not the self-lighting kind impregnated with lighter fluid, but just good old charcoal. Just put a good amount in both sections, and leave it open. Just put some newspaper down and that might help absorb some of it. But if it spilled all over and went in to some of the internal air ducts and things, the only thing you can do is tear it apart and either clean or a lot of times you have to replace...

SHERRY

That's a pretty big job?

JOHN SOWDEN

It can be. If this is your second fridge, it might not be worth getting into.

SHERRY

Where do you get this regular charcoal?

JOHN SOWDEN

Any place that sells stuff you'd use to throw on your grill. On our [website](#) we sell [stuff for odors and things](#), but for something like this I'd put a large amount in there and see if it absorbs. It might take a few weeks at least to do that, but since it's out in the garage and charcoal is pretty cheap, it's worth a try.

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

You can go to Home Depot or someplace, you can get a fifty-pound bag of Kingsford...

JOHN SOWDEN

I don't think she needs fifty pounds! Of course I don't know how bad it smells, either.

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

It sounds like a pretty serious smell problem!

SHERRY

Well, some of it's gone from cleaning it out with the baking soda, it's not what it was before, it's not as bad, and it was left like this I think for about a week.

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

Well, why don't you go do the charcoal thing and then call us back and tell us how it worked, Sherry?

SHERRY

Okay, how much would you suggest, some in the freezer and some in the [refrigerator](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, just take one shelf in the refrigerator section and just lay it out there and let it sit there.

SHERRY

Okay, leave it open?

JOHN SOWDEN

No, you can leave it running.

SHERRY

Oh, I should leave it running?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure, and what it's going to do is the air circulating from the [refrigerator](#) and [freezer](#) sections are going to circulate across that charcoal and absorb some of those odors. But again, if it is in the air ducts, in the insulation package, you might have to do a disassembly and cleaning and/or replacing in order to get it to go away.

SHERRY

Or, just throw it out.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

Well, that's an option that only you can decide.

SHERRY

No, I don't want to ... I should put it in the freezer then, too?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

SHERRY

I'll right. I'll try it.

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

We'd like to hear from you about how that works out, at least I would.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you know, I've tried that before; sometimes you literally have to tear the whole machine apart and start replacing the insulation, but if it's not too bad, if it hasn't spilled in there, it will help get rid of some of the lingering odors.

2007 Whirlpool Refrigerator Running Different Than the Old One

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

This is kind of a [refrigerator](#) day on the Appliance Repair Show. We continue with Rita, in Clinton Township. Go ahead, Rita.

RITA

I have a [Whirlpool twenty-one cubic food refrigerator](#), and the [freezer is up on the top](#). I just purchased it, and it runs like for fifteen minutes, off, fifteen and back again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. This is a new [refrigerator](#), and it doesn't act like your old one?

RITA

No!

JOHN SOWDEN

That's a very common thing. Most of the newer things will run almost half the time, but they're a lot more energy efficient. Any time you change appliances, people are used to the noises the old one makes, the run times, that you just kind of get used to; then you throw something else in there, there's an adjustment period where you have to get used to how this one works. Are you experiencing any [temperature problems](#) whatsoever?

RITA

Well, when they go in the [refrigerator](#), it will fog up on me, and I put some water in the freezer, you know, that's all frozen. I got water in the refrigerator; after I put water in a container in the refrigerator, it helped with the fog, but I can't leave the door open very long. They told me this runs eight percent of the time.

JOHN SOWDEN

They run at least half of the time anymore, they're made to run more to keep a more consistent temperature, but because of all the efficiencies and technologies over the years they've made it so it actually draws less current and is more efficient to run than you're older one. I know it doesn't make sense that it runs more and costs less, but it is in fact the way it works. Do you have the machine full, half-full; is there quite a bit of food in there?

RITA

Well, I live alone, so I don't have a lot in it, but I got it with these containers that I put in, you know, water.

JOHN SOWDEN

That helps, just to make sure you have a load in the [refrigerator](#), you want to make sure it has something to cool, so...

RITA

What do you think about the steamy bit when I open the door? It steams up?

JOHN SOWDEN

Are you seeing a vapor?

RITA

The glass gets foggy.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, a lot of time that's from the hot moist air hitting a cold surface. It may not be something that can be solved as far as that goes, especially on these humid days we've had lately. If you've got a new machine, you've got a one-year warranty; I would just monitor it, maybe put a [thermometer](#) in and see what temperatures you're getting.

RITA

Its forty degrees. I already checked that.

JOHN SOWDEN

That sounds pretty good to me. So, like I said, you've got some time to work it out and if anything should go wrong you've got a warranty and they'll come out and take care of it. Otherwise, it sounds like normal operation to me.

RITA

I see. All right, well thanks very much.

Amana Gas Range Burners Are Not All Lighting

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

Here's Larry, in Fort Gratiot, on the Appliance Repair Show on News Talk 760 WJR, brought to you by RepairClinic.com. Morning, Larry.

LARRY

I got a question about [surface burners](#) on an [Amana range](#). The left front burner, you turn it on, it lights up, the one behind it sometimes lights up, [the ones on the right don't light up](#), but they do light up with a match. And the [spark igniter](#)... I was thinking of putting new spark igniters in there, but you can see them spark, so I just really don't have any idea what's causing that problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can see each burner spark?

LARRY

I can see the spark igniter spark.

JOHN SOWDEN

For each [burner](#)? When you turn it on, each of the four sparks?

LARRY

They do.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. And some light intermittently and some don't?

LARRY

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally, that's caused from the burner assembly or the [caps](#) are dirty. You've got debris in there, a lot of times there are small holes in there that the pilot gas comes through in order to hit those [spark igniters](#), and if those are plugged up, then they will light

intermittently. But if they're all sparking and if they have a good spark, electrically it's working, so it's in the gas supply. That is normally from the burners, if you have a spillover or something like that, the holes in the [burner assembly](#) are restricted and you're not getting the proper gas to that spark to light.

LARRY

Now when I light the left front burner, if I light the one behind it then that lights, then I can go over to the other side and light them, but I've got to light the rear burner before the ones on the right will even think about going on. But, they will go on sometimes on the right hand side if I do light the left rear burner.

JOHN SOWDEN

Again what you're doing is you're using more gas, so it could be again that they're dirty, but it is possible that you have a problem with the regulator to the [stove](#) that keeps the constant flow, they, normally on the natural, it's like four inches of water column they run those. It could be that the [regulator](#) is sticking or not working properly and causing that intermittent problem, but I'd start with just making sure that the burner assemblies are clean that's the most often...

LARRY

Do you unscrew that cap that's got the [orifices](#) in it and clean it?

JOHN SOWDEN

I don't know what your particular [stove](#) looks like, so I can't tell you exactly what to do as far as disassembly, but yeah, normally in the burner itself...

LARRY

There's a [cap](#) that goes on top of the burner itself.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. And there's the [burner head assembly](#), and that could be plugged up or dirty.

LARRY

Okay. I'll give it a shot.

2000 Whirlpool Refrigerator, Model ET18PK, Temperature Is Fluctuating

JOHN MCCOLLUCH

And, here's a question from Raymond, in Detroit, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Raymond, go ahead please.

RAYMOND

We've had it for a number of years now, close to six or seven years, a [Whirlpool, ET18PK](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, what's the problem you're having with it?

RAYMOND

The problem there is that in the very beginning part, everything was just fine and lovely with that machine for a couple years. I know it goes in the defrost cycle; I know what's happening there. When the refrigerator goes into the defrost cycle it would get maybe twenty degrees and when it comes back it goes right down to zero. After a couple years, it has started to act funny. It would come on and go, "bzzzz BOOM!" The compressor [would not start](#). It was still under the warranty, so we ended up with a new compressor in there. They put the compressor in, everything seemed to be okay, but now the last year, it started to act differently. Everything works in the cycle except now the freezer can hold about twelve degrees and the bottom is about forty, forty-one, which is close. But when it goes into defrost the upper part goes close to thirty degrees. The lowest I've seen it now is about twelve. Now the last time it was still under a little warranty yet, so we called the people up, the fellow came down and he looked it over there and he ended up, took that back panel off the inside of the freezer, and he said he found a restriction in the line. Now I don't know how, he hit it with a [hammer](#) or a [screwdriver](#), and he said he gave it a little shot of 134, and it seems okay. Well, it was okay for a little while but now it's doing the same thing.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. Well, what happened is when the refrigerant cannot travel through the tubing as it was designed to do. It goes through a normally small, the size of a pencil lead or smaller in diameter tube called a capillary tube. If that is restricted in any way with moisture or debris, what you have is you're starving your evaporator, your cooling coil, and sometimes what happens is, if you have impurities in the system, it will run fine, and then all of a sudden you'll get some moisture in that line and it will restrict it halfway. So yeah, sometimes you can smack it, sometimes you can heat it up. But normally what you want to do in that situation if you have a restriction is to first, discharge the unit, pull a really good vacuum on it, make sure you've cleaned out the interior portion of the refrigerant lines, and then recharge it. So, you still might have some sealed system problems that are looming from the past work that's been done. You might want to call for service on that.

RAYMOND

What this fellow did last time, it was still under warranty, and gave me a paper that said he's cleared the restriction by tapping or whatever he did there and then gave it a shot of 134.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, then I'd call him back and see if they'll come out and have a re-look at that. That's what I would do anyway.