

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—December 09, 2007

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Stackable Dryer Leaving Burn Marks on Clothing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Let's take a question on a stackable [washer](#) and [dryer](#) from Gerald, in Grass Lake, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Gerald.

GERALD

Yes. I've got a question on the dryer portion of my stackable unit. Do you need the [model number](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

What do you have going on?

GERALD

On the dryer portion, it's beginning to show [burn marks](#) on delicate fabrics and I believe that it's getting caught in the upper edge of the drum.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

GERALD

Now I have a little up and down movement on the front edge of the tumbler...

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, basically what happens is as time goes on, the [felt seals](#) around the drum itself get worn, and if...there's two different styles of the dryers, one has a fixed [bearing](#) in the

back and the other rides on a set of little [tires](#), for lack of better words. As those get worn, the drum sags a little and puts a lot of wear onto the felt seals and then the clothes, as it's tumbling, can get pinched between the back panel and the drum and it will leave streaks and things of that nature.

GERALD

It sounds exactly like what's happening.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, basically it's a disassembly of the dryer and you need to replace any of the worn parts that are allowing that and you'll probably have to replace the [felt seals](#) as well to get that to straighten out. And, it's always a good time to vacuum out the [blower housing](#). Clean everything inside there while you're in there. Unfortunately, being stackable they're not much fun because most of them are built into a closet or where you have to drag it out and it's a little more time to repair.

GERALD

It's fairly accessible, but is there a [bearing](#) unit in the back of the drum or not?

JOHN SOWDEN

If you put the [model number](#) as it reads off the unit into our website, you'll see all the parts for it. It will tell you if you've got the tire style, which is normally older, or the fixed rear bearing, and they'll also show you there's a [front glide kit](#) that is a set of pads and felt between them that the drum rides on that are probably worn out from the drum sagging and leaving gaps.

GERALD

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

You're probably better to just start fresh, put some new seals on the drum assembly and clean it out, replace any of the wearing parts that are allowing the drum to sag and you'll be in pretty good shape.

GERALD

Okay, very good. Thank you.

Furnace Mounted Humidifier Fan Is Not Working

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Mark, in Livonia, with a [humidifier](#) question on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Mike.

MIKE

I have a question. I bought a house about a year ago and the humidifier on my furnace is old and I'm looking to replace it. I've looked at a couple styles and I was wondering if

you might be able to recommend one. I looked at drum style like the Desert Spring and I've looked at the [Aprilaire](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, there are two basic differences in the furnace mount humidifiers. One has got a sponge mounted to a drum that turns when the furnace is on and the air passes across that.

MIKE

That's the one I have now but it's old and partially broken and I'm just looking to get something newer.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, again replacement, a lot of the parts are still available for a lot of those things, and either one you're going to have to maintain. The other style you mentioned is more of what they call a [flow-through](#) and that is basically a honeycomb type pad that water drips on the top of it and as water dribbles down through that pad the air goes across it and then humidifies the air. Each one you're going to have some maintenance, probably the best thing you can do is replace the [media pad](#) or the sponge pad on the drum style every year. And you're going to have to disassemble them, you should every spring, and clean them out either with vinegar or something to help with the water scale. The difference in the two types is the one holds water in the [reservoir](#), which is more likely to sometimes get mold or whatever if you don't take care of it. And the other style, because it's a flow-through, it wastes water. You have a drain and water trickles down and that remainder does go down the drain. It's not a huge amount of water but in places where water is expensive, it's one thing to consider. It really just depends on a few things. If you are going to install it yourself, which one fits the existing opening the best so you don't have to do a lot of modification. The other thing is you could look at putting the one that you have back in service because really there's not a lot to these, there's just normally a [float valve](#) or a water valve, a [media pad](#) and a [pan](#). So if you buy a new one you have the same components.

MIKE

Okay. So if I try to repair the one I have, right now the fan is not working.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

MIKE

And so I put it on test and everything and so I don't really know where to begin to describe to repair that, would it just be the fan that's not working?

JOHN SOWDEN

You could need a new [fan motor](#). A lot of times you can, if you remove the fan motor and it's frozen up, a lot of the motors will have oil ports on them, and if you put three or four drops of oil in each end of the motor and spin the shaft for a little bit and you can

free up those bearings and get some more miles out of it. If not, you can replace the motor itself.

MIKE

I can spin it by hand, I can spin the [fan blades](#) by hand, but it's just not kicking on.

JOHN SOWDEN

If that's the case then it might not be getting the voltage required to turn on the motor, which normally they're wired through a [humidistat](#) then fire up. The [relay board](#) could have failed. It really depends on the style you have, but if the fan turns freely, it's not frozen up. It could still be an electrical problem, even with the fan or it's just not getting current to it. To throw it away and not at least look into it a little more, I don't want you to waste your money so it's something I would at least look at.

MIKE

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's really a matter of choice. Either one you're going to have to maintain if you want the best performance out of it.

MIKE

All right. Thank you very much.

1985 Gibson Freezer Signal Light Flashing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here with a question on a 1985 [Gibson freezer](#), Lorraine, in Rochester Hills, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Lorraine. What is the problem?

LORRAINE

Good morning. Well, about a month ago the [signal light](#) on the bottom of the Gibson freezer was flashing. So I opened the freezer door up because I don't go in it very often, and it was defrosting itself. So I unplugged it, took everything out, cleaned it out, left it unplugged for a couple of days. And then I plugged it back in and I tested it and it does freeze to zero degrees, but the signal light is still flashing and it doesn't tell me what to do about it and I'm wondering, you know, if it's freezing the signal light, in the book it says it's telling you that the power is not reaching the freezer, but it is down to zero.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, a lot of times if the unit reaches a certain temperature it will send current to the signal light that's a warning light I think is what they...do they have a red and an amber light on this?

LORRAINE

Yes, it's an amber light, it's on the bottom of the freezer, it's an '85 Gibson.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you're getting good temperatures, the other thing at times, depending on the control on it that you've got a current bleed through the [thermostat](#) or it could just be that light is starting to fail and sometimes they'll flicker. So the first thing is I'd make sure before you fill it out, I'd get several milk jugs, fill them up with water—

LORRAINE

I did that, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

And make sure you put a load in it and that things are working well. Otherwise, it's really a matter of the light itself is failing or the thermostat is sending current to that when it shouldn't be. Either one really isn't a problem as long as the unit works well, if you can get around the light flickering. I would watch it, because normally that is a sign of problems to come, or it can be.

LORRAINE

Right. So we did go online and no one can tell us online where we could get any help either to replace the light or the thermostat so aren't the parts available somewhere?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, there's a website you can go to. It's called [RepairClinic.com](#).

LORRAINE

We did!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes?

LORRAINE

It didn't give us any help.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you have a specific question you can go into the "[Contact Us](#)" section of the site, give us your email address and ask us your question, provide us the [model number](#) as it reads off the unit itself and we can try to research that. Normally, it's a one or two day turnaround on a lot of the email requests. Certain times of the year we sometimes get backed up a little more beyond that, but we do try to address each one as they come in and look into it. As far as parts availability for it, if you put the model number in, you should be able to see all the common parts for your unit to get an understanding of what cost might be involved.

LORRAINE

No, it didn't give us any availability of parts. So what is your website?

JOHN SOWDEN

It's [RepairClinic.com](#). Now being an '85, you might have a situation where there isn't anything available that we have in a digital format for that, but we certainly can look it up and get parts for you. So if you send us an email and ask how much the light would be for this model of [Gibson](#), we can research that for you, we have to dig out some of the books and microfiche type stuff in order to do it, but we have resources to get you all the information you need.

LORRAINE

Okay, because that signal light is like one whole unit, it's just not a [bulb](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it plugs in basically. Two wires go to it and it just snaps into place.

LORRAINE

Oh, okay. Well we'll try that then, thank you.

GE Washing Machine Clutch is Broken

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here with a [GE washer](#) problem, Mary, in Shelby Township, on the Appliance Repair Show. Mary, what is the problem?

MARY

Well, the pulley housing on the bottom of my washer broke where the [belt](#) goes around where it sits on the shaft of the [motor](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

The clutch?

MARY

Yeah. Well, it's the pulley, the [clutch](#) itself, the internal parts are all fine, but what happened was, it's got a rolled edge so half of that pulley sheared off. And what I'm trying to do. I looked on GE's website to see about getting a replacement part, and they show only the complete assembly.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, they used to sell the parts to that [motor and clutch assembly](#) in pieces, and then they basically now make it available as an assembly. You can buy the upper clutch assembly, the big drum I guess for lack of better words, and then disassemble your motor and reattach the new clutch to that, but normally for thirty or forty dollars more you can get the whole brand new motor clutch assembly as one component, which if you're going to put money into it I would just replace the whole thing.

MARY

Where would I get that from? Because I've looked on their site, but in their exploded drawings, the clutch assembly inside of it doesn't match the clutch assembly that we took out of the [washer](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Hmm.

MARY

Because they're only showing the single speed motor clutch assembly on the site and I can't find any other exploded drawings, there's not even a close match to what we have inside of this one.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you're looking for the two-speed clutch assembly is what you're looking for?

MARY

Yeah, I think that's what I'm looking for, because the only thing on the GE website is the single speed.

JOHN SOWDEN

According to what it shows for your machine, they show that you can have a one or two speed clutch, and then they leave it up to you to make that determination which one you have. You can try our website, put the [model number](#) into our website and you should be able to see all those components for that. If you for some reason have any other questions or concerns you can call us at 888-34-FIXIT and we have people that will try to look that up and help you with that. If not, you can also log into the [website](#) and ask your specific question via email. But I know that the clutch assembly is still available as a complete assembly.

MARY

Is there some place locally where we could get that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, actually our parts counter is open from eight to six seven days a week and we are off Michigan Avenue in Canton, Michigan with Beck being the nearest major cross street. And, we're open today, so if it's something that you wanted to tackle today you could shoot down there and pick one up.

MARY

Great! Why thank you!

JOHN SOWDEN

Hopefully we've helped a little today.

2007 Maytag Quiet Series Dishwasher Not Drying Dishes

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And, we go now to Dave in Fostoria with a problem with a brand new [Maytag dishwasher](#) here on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead, Dave.

DAVE

I've got a brand new Maytag Quiet Series 400 dishwasher, and it works perfect, except for [it does not dry](#) my dishes.

JOHN SOWDEN

When you say it doesn't dry, is it you're not getting any heat for the dry cycle, or the dishes aren't as dry as your old dishwasher used to dry them? There's a difference between one is not working at all and the other isn't working up to expectations.

DAVE

It just doesn't dry them at all.

JOHN SOWDEN

So everything is just wet when you open the door?

DAVE

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, in your particular situation there are three or four components that can cause that failure. One is the [heater](#) itself could fail, the current's also wired through the [door switch](#), and then another small thermostat mounted underneath the unit which senses the temperature of the tub, and then the [control board](#) is what completes the circuit for the heated dry. Now I'm assuming you're selecting the heated dry portion?

DAVE

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, one thing you can do is, if the unit was out of warranty I would say you have to troubleshoot it and find out where you're losing voltage and on what component. But if the unit is less than a year old, most come with a one year warranty and I would recommend not doing anything yourself and calling for warranty service and having them come out and take care of this.

DAVE

Well that's what I thought. It's probably a month old.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. But it could be something that's just literally a loose wire or something. As these things come down the assembly line somebody forgets to plug something in or whatever and that's why they have warranties.

DAVE

That's correct. Okay, thank you.

Kenmore Glass Top Range Damaged By a CD Being Dropped On the Hot Burner

JOHN MCCULLOCH

That was easy! Here's Heather, in Roseville, with a question on a [Kenmore glass top range](#) on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Heather, go ahead please.

HEATHER

Hi there. About a year or so ago I dropped a CD on a hot [burner](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Ouch!

HEATHER

Yeah, it was lovely; it smelled horrible! We scraped it off and the burner became pitted so we haven't used the burner. So I just wondered, is it safe to cook on that burner or not using it is the best thing to do?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, if you've basically compromised the integrity of that top by putting pits or scratches in there, that's more than likely where, if it's going to fail, it will fail. So I'd say you know, a lot of people still use it and a lot of times it will go for years and years like that, but if you put a heavy pot on there and the heat's just right and you move it around, that's normally when the [top](#) will shatter.

HEATHER

Oh, okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. So I guess for lack of better words, if you can get around it probably you shouldn't use that section. Like I said, I've seen people use them for years and years and over time the tops do get scratches and nicks. But normally when they crack or break, that's where it will start, wherever there are any flaws in the top itself, and when it cracks, normally it really cracks so it would be time for a new one.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Can you replace that top?

JOHN SOWDEN

Certainly can, but it's not a cheap endeavor.

HEATHER

Oh, no, it costs as much as a new stove.

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends on the stove, but yeah most [glass tops](#) are two to four hundred dollars and then if you do it yourself you can save normally a hundred bucks in labor but you have to be careful because all these [burners](#) are mounted on the underside of the glass and the burners are fragile so if you get in there and drop it or crack a burner you're going to spend another fifty to one hundred dollars to replace that burner. It can get real expensive real quick. Normally, it's about half the cost of what they range would be.

HEATHER

Thank you very much.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Now I didn't realize that they were that fragile! I was thinking about getting a glass top range. Now all of a sudden that doesn't sound to me like it would be all thumbs up.

JOHN SOWDEN

They're actually quite durable, and there are a lot of units that have been out there for years and as time goes on they actually get better. I personally prefer the smooth top, it's easier to clean and it holds spills so it doesn't drip all over and it's something that you don't have to totally disassemble the unit to fix it. And if you keep the [cleaner](#) on it and they make a cleaner for it, which is for lack of better words, a wax that keeps the spills from really penetrating it, but over time one of the biggest things is people dropping things on it. It takes a pretty good shock to break one, but it happens. And a lot of the times in today's kitchen layouts people will have their [over-the-range microwave](#) mounted over the stove and as they drag a hot dish out of the microwave, they'll drop it, or they'll put the spice rack above the stove and drop things on it, so it's location, location, location as they say.

Kenmore Dryer Taking Too Long To Dry

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's a question on a [Kenmore dryer](#) from Charlie, in Marine City, on the Appliance Repair Show, brought to you by RepairClinic.com.

CHARLIE

I have a dryer that probably a year ago [quit drying](#). It takes two or three cycles to do nothing, it's not hot...

JOHN SOWDEN

Boy Charlie, I could barely hear that, you're breaking up on me. Could you repeat that, please?

JOHN MCCULLOCH

I think I got part of it. Charlie's problem is he's got a dryer that was working fine, it's a Kenmore, and now [it takes two or three different cycles in a row to get the clothes dry](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, so there's no heat, he's just air-fluffing the dryer. That beats the clothes up pretty well too when you do that. The first thing is if it's an [electric dryer](#), make sure you have the proper voltage to the dryer. Just because the drum turns doesn't mean that you don't have a problem with the fuse box or the incoming power supply. You need two hundred and forty volts to drive that, and one hundred and twenty volts to drive the motor. So you could just have a blown fuse or a bad circuit breaker in your house. If that seems to be okay, you could have a broken [heating element](#), a [thermal fuse](#) depending on the dryer and how it's wired in there, or a bad [thermostat](#) that causes it. The other thing that can be that's not as often found is the motor itself has a [motor start switch](#) mounted to it, and what that does is it makes sure that the unit is turning before it allows you to turn on the heat, and at times that switch will fail. But there are normally four or five components in that circuit that could cause the unit to not heat properly. But always start at the wall where you plug it in and make sure you have the proper current. I've had a lot of people replace a lot of parts only to find out that they weren't getting power.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And is the current something that can change?

JOHN SOWDEN

No, but you need two hundred and forty volts and it's two legs of one hundred and twenty volts coming in; it's possible that one has dropped out which drives the heating element, and the other one drives the controls and the [motor](#). So you'll turn it on, it will start, it will run, but you don't have the other side of the current to drive the heating component in the dryer. So it's been the course of many arguments where it can't be a power problem because the unit tumbles, and it ends up being a burnt wire somewhere or a blown fuse in the circuit breaker or a bad circuit breaker. Always start at the wall.

Kenmore 70 Series Washer Not Draining All the Water and Leaving Clothes Still Wet

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Joe from Detroit is next with a question on a [Kenmore 70 Series washer](#). Good morning Joe, what is your problem?

JOE

After I finish my spin on the washer, I feel there's a lot of water left in there, like by the sound of it, is that normal?

JOHN SOWDEN

There's a lot of water left in the bottom of the drum, are the [clothes wet](#), are they sitting in water?

JOE

Yeah, yeah, sitting in water.

JOHN SOWDEN

They're sitting in water after a spin cycle?

JOE

Yeah, I can feel there is, yeah. Is that normal?

JOHN SOWDEN

Is there water in the drum, or is it just that [the clothes are extremely wet](#)?

JOE

Well, I'm relaying the message to you from someone else.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, okay.

JOE

She says to me that when she finished her cycle, all the water drained in the sink, through the [hose](#), but she noticed some left there.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if that's the case, it depends on the unit. It could be something caught in the [pump](#) itself, and a lot of times if you get a small garment, a sock, a washcloth, it will flip over the inner tub and get caught between the outer tub, and it can physically restrict the drain hole. It could be that the unit's [not spinning](#) up to speed. If there is water in the bottom of the tank itself, then I would suspect more of a drain problem. If the clothes are just really wet, then I would suspect a spin problem, which could be a loose [belt](#), a broken [coupler](#), or part of the [drive system](#) has failed where the tub is not engaging with the transmission. At this point, I would suggest going over and looking at the machine and seeing what is happening start to finish, and which one it is. Are you getting just a little bit of water left, or are the clothes extremely wet?

JOE

If the clothes are extremely wet, okay, that means there is something wrong?

JOHN SOWDEN

Either way there's something wrong, it just depends which direction you go in trying to figure out what it is, one as I said is if there's water standing in there it's not able to get it out of the machine and that's normally either the pump or a plugged [drain hose](#) or something in the drain system. If the water is draining out and yet the [clothes are not being spun dry](#), then you have a drive train problem and either the [transmission](#) where the tub mounts to the top of the transmission or there is what they call a drive block and it's the coupling between the tub and the transmission that could be stripped out. But the

problem with a third party, is I'm not there and you're not there, so it's hard to determine exactly what's going on.

JOE

She was pretty direct: after the cycle is finished, she feels there is still water left in the machine.

JOHN SOWDEN

Then I would start with the pump, a lot of times just take the hoses off going to the [pump](#) and if there's a restriction it will probably be right there looking at you, like a bunch of lint or—

JOE

She also said it does do a lot of draining in the sink after that cycle, because we have the hose draining...

JOHN MCCULLOCH

But if it's restricted as it's coming out then it's not all going to come out.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, it's on a [timer](#). You have so many minutes for spin and drain, and if you're taking your water flow and physically restricting that water line, the unit's going to finish that spin cycle, and because you're only going to get half that water out, you're still going to have some left.

JOE

Okay, so there's something wrong then, one way or another.

JOHN SOWDEN

Looks like you're going to go to work this morning, Joe.

1997 GE Dryer Squeaking Periodically

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here's a problem with a [GE dryer](#) from Dave, in Chelsea, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Dave.

DAVE

It is a ten year old General Electric dryer, and I moved it from a basement laundry up to an upstairs laundry room that we built for my wife. After we moved it I started to get a squeak.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

DAVE

And my initial thought was I just didn't have it leveled, so I got it all leveled and everything else but [it still squeaks](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. Well, does the dryer squeak through the whole cycle or after it runs for a while or periodically?

DAVE

Periodically.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well, the squeaking could be a few things. There's a [bearing](#) that the rear of the drum is mounted to and there's a plastic wear piece, socket I guess for lack of better words, and it's possible that's worn out and you have metal to metal. If that's the case, you can disassemble the dryer, replace the rear bearing kit. On our website we have instructions on how to disassemble that and the kit itself I think is around thirty, forty dollar range. And then the front of the drum rides on a set of [glides](#). They're either two pads on the bottom of the front of the drum, or on the newer style, but yours is kind of in that transition period, where there's a set of glides at the top of the dryer and then a plastic shroud that the drum rides on. And that could be worn out, too, causing the drum to sag. The last thing, if all these wearing parts look okay, is on occasion the motor bearing itself will be worn and start to squeal and that's normally periodic and after it heats up a little bit, you'll get some chirping out of that. But most often it's from the rear drum assembly. So you almost have to tear it down and do a physical inspection to go any further here.

DAVE

Okay, we'll give it a try.

1996 Kitchen Aid Gas Dryer with No Heat

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here with a question on another dryer, [Kitchen Aid dryer](#) this time, Mike, in Plymouth, on the News Talk Radio 760 Appliance Repair Show.

MIKE

I have a KitchenAid gas dryer and it's about ten to thirteen years old. Yesterday we put a load in; it worked fine, the second load it tumbled fine but [no heat](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Does this have a lower panel that you can remove and look?

MIKE

Yes, it does.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it's got a two-piece front on it?

MIKE

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. If you remove the front on the lower panel and start the unit up, set it up to heat, watch the [gas valve assembly](#), and you should see after about thirty seconds a bright orange glow, which would be the igniter glowing. And then after the [igniter](#) basically gets up to the heat is generated to actuate what they call the light sensor, then you will hear a click and then the gas should turn on.

MIKE

I'm not getting that click.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, so the igniter's glowing.

MIKE

I'm not sure, I did take the bottom piece off but I didn't do the sequence you just talked about.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you need to watch it. If it's glowing, and it never turns off, then I would suspect a [light sensor](#). If it glows and you hear a click and the igniter turns off and no gas, and then you wait another two or three minutes and you see it glow and you get another click and the gas doesn't turn on again, then I would suspect you have, on the gas valve itself there's a set of [solenoid coils](#) that can fail. Those aren't really that difficult to fix, it's a pretty decent do it yourselfer type job to replace those. They are not real expensive either, normally the solenoid coils are twenty five to fifty dollars for the set of coils, and what happens is they just get tired over a period of time. If you have no glow whatsoever, then I would start with making sure the [igniter](#) is not broken. You can check that with an [ohmmeter](#) and you should also see if you have a small crack. Or, if again, the igniter's not glowing, it's either the igniter has failed or you're not getting any power to the gas valve assembly, and that would be something up the stream in the circuit, which would be a [thermostat](#) or even a [timer](#) at times can cause that.

MIKE

Sure.

JOHN SOWDEN

Best thing to do is remove the panel, put down a rug, grab a flashlight, and watch your dryer for about ten or fifteen minutes and see exactly what it's doing, and from there you should be able to determine what needs to be fixed. If you have any other questions or concerns you can log into our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), and we can take it from there.

MIKE

Excellent. Thank you very much.