

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—December 23, 2007

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1997 GE Profile Side by Side Refrigerator with Icemaker Fill Tube Freezing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We're going to start things off this hour with a ten-year-old GE icemaker question from Jeff in West Bloomfield on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead, Jeff.

JEFF

Yeah, I have a [GE Profile](#), I bought it about ten years ago; it's a side by side. And there's a [plastic tube](#) that pours water into the icemaker at the top. That freezes solid and the water then has nowhere to go. It never reaches the filler tray there, it splashes down the

back and it freezes that little drain hole solid at the bottom too. And then [water pours out the bottom of the freezer](#) and on to the floor.

JOHN SOWDEN

Have you tried clearing out the tube?

JEFF

Yes, I have.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it works for maybe a week and then does it again?

JEFF

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. Well what's happening is the water is not positively turning off going to the icemaker. So you have a small trickle that comes in, and after one fill you have a little bit of water buildup and then it fills again until you eventually freeze the whole [fill tube](#) over. The reason for that generally is one of two things, and that is either the icemaker [inlet valve](#) is not seating properly, or the water supply to it is reduced. You need about eighteen pounds of pressure on that valve to seat it properly. A lot of times what happens is, if you've got the saddle valve or mounting valve on your plumbing, that feeds the [icemaker](#) and the one that punches the small hole in the pipe. A lot of times what happens is that small hole gets restricted with sediment and so you have low water pressure to the icemaker valve, and then it doesn't operate properly.

JEFF

I've been turning that off and on to stop the ice buildup.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

JEFF

I've been re-puncturing that.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, but the problem is it could be that the needle valve is stuck in there, or just the hole isn't big enough. Those mounting style valves are okay to use, I generally recommend one that what you do is you take a drill and drill a quarter inch hole in the pipe and then you mount the saddle valve. It's a different style valve, a drill style valve. And that allows a much greater flow of water to your [water valve](#), and it will also help with the water in the door for not having to stand there all day to fill up your glass. But, I'd start with the water supply and make sure that's up to par. If that, after you cure that and you're still having problems then I'd replace the water valve.

JEFF

Ok. And is there anything inside the [refrigerator](#) that I do?

JOHN SOWDEN

You shouldn't have to do anything inside the refrigerator. It's all in the water supply to the [icemaker](#).

JEFF

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

You'll have to defrost the tube again to get it back in operation.

JEFF

Right and you said something about a shutoff valve?

JOHN SOWDEN

That's whatever you have mounted to your household plumbing

JEFF

Yeah, I understand that.

JOHN SOWDEN

And the [water inlet valve](#) is the plastic part with the wires going to it that the [water line](#) in your house is mounted to. What happens is, after the icemaker cycles it sends power to that for about seven seconds and tells it to fill that tray back up.

JEFF

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

And if that's not shutting off completely, you'll have the same effect of the water trickling in and over a period of time it ices over that, too.

JEFF

And how do I check that?

JOHN SOWDEN

How do you check the [valve](#)?

JEFF

How do I check whether it's turning that on and off?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well if it's freezing over, it's turning it on and off. It's calling for water; it's just not getting to the [icemaker](#). So I'd start with the water supply at your house, de-ice the [tube](#),

and if it starts working that's great. If not, if you run into the same problem, I would then replace the water inlet valve.

JEFF

Ok. Thank you.

GE Side by Side Refrigerator Door Does Not Close Properly

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we'll start this segment off with a question on a [GE fridge](#), from Erin in Oak Park, on the Appliance Repair Show. Erin, go ahead please.

ERIN

Yes, I went to open the refrigerator side of the [refrigerator](#). I didn't catch the [handle](#) fast enough and the door swung open real hard all the way, and like pieces of little black things came off from the bottom. And the door no longer closes well. I can push it closed but it doesn't stay closed, it opens up a bit.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you have two little plastic pieces that fell off the bottom of the door?

ERIN

From the bottom.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. That's part of the [door closing cams](#), is what they're called. What you have to do is replace the lower hinge, because one of the cams is riveted to the hinge, and the upper cam is then screwed into the bottom of the door. So you need to replace the lower door hinge for the refrigerator door.

ERIN

Ok, where can I get it and can my husband do it himself or do I need a professional?

JOHN SOWDEN

It's a pretty straightforward repair. If you log into [repairclinic.com](#), get the [model number](#) complete as it reads off the refrigerator, not off the brochure, you can stop over and pick one up today. They normally run between twenty and forty dollars. There are normally just a few bolts that hold on the lower hinge, so if your husband is fairly handy and you've got a basic [set of sockets](#) and stuff like that, it should be something he could do in a half hour or so.

ERIN

If we can pay for a repairman, where can I get someone, whom can I call?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, right now, first of all I would call whomever you have locally, and you might want to either talk to friends as far as a reference goes, or you can call [GE](#) direct and they can send somebody out. It's never a bad idea to have somebody from the factory come out, although unfortunately you pay a premium for that. And at this time I'd say, from experience I'd say they're all pretty booked until after the holiday, maybe until after the first of the year. This time of year a lot of last-minute stuff pops up and a lot of the guys are quite busy. If you have somebody come out and do it you're adding about seventy or eighty dollars onto the repair. So if it's something you want to tackle yourself this would be a good way to save a few bucks and put it towards the Christmas Visa bill.

ERIN

So I should call GE probably?

JOHN SOWDEN

You could call them and they would certainly come out and do it. You could pick up the part at [repairclinic.com](#) and do it yourself, and if you decide to have it done, just let them know what's going on. Tell them you need the lower door hinge assembly so that they bring one with them and do it all in one trip.

1995 Kitchen Aid Refrigerator Making a Clicking Noise Before It Kicks On

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And now we'll go to a twelve year old [Kitchen Aid fridge](#) and Nadine in Dearborn, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Nadine, go ahead please.

NADINE

Yes, we have this Kitchen Aid refrigerator, double door. Every so often, like in the morning, it has a [clicking noise](#). It kind of clicks maybe about ten times and then it finally kicks in.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok, have you experienced it [not cooling](#) or losing any food?

NADINE

No, there's no problem with the operation of the refrigerator. The freezer is working and the lower part is working.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok, well from what you're describing, I would suspect that the [overload relay package](#) for the compressor has gotten weak and it's taken a while to get the compressor started. Normally, replacing the starting components for the compressor will solve this problem. If you do that and it continues to have that problem, then you more than likely have a compressor that's worn and it might conk out on you. But from what you're describing, the most common problem is the starting package or the overload and relay for the refrigerator. If you get the [model number](#) as it reads off the tag on the appliance itself, go to [repairclinic.com](#) and enter that information, you'll see a picture of that relay package

as well as the cost. That's something that you have to be somewhat familiar with electricity in order to install it, because sometimes these things come as a kit and you have to know what you have existing and how to wire it in. So this might be something that you'll want to call for service on.

NADINE

Ok. Thank you very much.

Kenmore Side by Side Refrigerator Not Dispensing Ice

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And now for a question on a [Kenmore refrigerator](#), here's Tim in Wisteria, Ohio on NewsTalk 760 WJR. Hi Tim, go ahead please.

TIM

Hi. Yeah, I have a side-by-side refrigerator, a [Kenmore](#) with the ice through the door. We recently moved it, and since we've moved it now twice a week we have to remove a big chunk of ice from the chute because it won't come through the door. The [auger](#) won't break it up.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok, so you have a dispensing problem. It's making ice; it's just not dispensing it properly.

TIM

It's making ice just fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

Does this have the [icemaker](#) dispenser in the door itself, or is it in the [refrigerator](#) on a shelf?

TIM

It's in the freezer, but yeah, and then the [chute](#) comes through the door.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, I don't know if moving it had anything to do with it, but most often what happens is that little door is not sealing properly; then you get a lot of moist air that gets up in there and freezes it open, and then you end up having ice blockage so the ice can't come out.

TIM

Yeah, this is what it seems like, the ice has melted together right at the—

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, that's from an air leak. You need to inspect the [flapper door](#). Depending on the unit some have a spring mechanism that seals that door, some have a solenoid that seats, so you have to kind of disassemble the dispenser assembly and find out—there's a lot of

little plastic pieces in there—and see if you can figure out what’s broken. If nothing else I’d just replace that damper door, sometimes that rubber seal gets worn and it doesn’t seal. It doesn’t take very much of an air leak to cause that situation.

TIM

Yeah. All right, thank you very much.

Whirlpool Refrigerator Ice Maker Not Producing Ice

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We’ll go now to a question on another [refrigerator](#) with June in Milford on NewsTalk 760 WJR. Hi June, go ahead please.

JUNE

Good morning. I have a [Whirlpool refrigerator](#) that isn’t that old. Within a year the icemaker failed, and they came out under warranty and replaced it. Now it’s just two or three years later, and we heard the [icemaker](#) just humming like it was running and running. We looked and there’s nothing that prevented it from cycling. There’s nothing, [there’s no water](#), there’s nothing in it, and it’s completely failed. And I’m tired of going to the store to get ice and dumping it in the icemaker just so I can dispense it through the door. Do you have any thoughts on that?

JOHN SOWDEN

First of all, the icemaker itself has probably failed. Those are not serviceable on a unit that new, most of them are a one-piece unit and you get a new icemaker. Was it making proper cubes prior?

JUNE

Yeah, everything was fine and then one day we just heard it humming and nothing was happening. When it was working you would hear the hum and it would cycle and the ice would drop out...

JOHN SOWDEN

Does this have a little switch on the side of the [icemaker](#), an on/off switch?

JUNE

A little door...a switch?

JOHN SOWDEN

On the icemaker itself there’s normally...if you’re looking at it on the right hand side you’ll see a little switch that says on/off, on the newer style.

JUNE

Yeah!

JOHN SOWDEN

That's a [one-piece icemaker](#), and all you can do is replace the icemaker. But the first thing I would do is I would remove it and inspect the tube that runs water to it and make sure that's not frozen over. If it is then you have a water supply problem. If that's not the case and you put it back in and it doesn't make ice then I would replace the icemaker. The one thing you want to watch out for though by buying the ice in a bag and dumping it in the dispenser is that dispenser is made to accommodate the size of ice cubes that your current icemaker produces.

JUNE

Right, I made sure that they're tiny.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, because you can end up with other problems, like the gentleman who called earlier with the [icemaker](#) door sticking open and things of that nature.

JUNE

No, I do make sure that they're tiny. Now, do you have the whole icemaker then?

JOHN SOWDEN

I sure do.

JUNE

And how much does that cost?

JOHN SOWDEN

I think they're about one hundred and thirty dollars.

JUNE

Oh my gosh!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, they're not giving them away. You can get just the icemaker, or you can get the whole [icemaker kit assembly](#), but yeah most icemakers start at about one hundred bucks. You'd be surprised at how many people give those as Christmas gifts, John. Ice makers!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Really? I would never have thought of such a thing.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, we've sold them to quite a few people who are sick of going to Mom and Dad's house and there's no ice. Well, I think it's kind of their Christmas gift but it's wrapped up for Mom and Dad or whomever. But yeah, people that have [refrigerators](#) that don't have an icemaker, they give them as gifts.

JUNE

Are the replacements any better? Because this would be the third icemaker in this fairly new machine!

JOHN SOWDEN

It would be the same icemaker you have, and it's a factory-authorized part. It is unusual that you would have that many failures on an icemaker like that. I would chalk it up to more bad luck rather than a real problem with that particular style. We do sell them and replace them, but to have three in three years is, I would say is a little out of the ordinary.

JUNE

And is the new one then guaranteed for a year?

JOHN SOWDEN

I think [Whirlpool](#) has a one-year on replacement parts, but a lot of other manufacturers have ninety days now.

JUNE

Oh dear.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

JUNE

Built-in obsolescence.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, an [icemaker](#) is an appliance within an appliance, so your [refrigerator](#) can be working fine but if the icemaker quits it's another added cost.

JUNE

Ok. Thank you very much.

2005 Whirlpool Gas Range Oven Broiler Will Not Stay Lit

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here's a question on a range, from Bill in Livonia, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Bill.

BILL

Yeah, I have a [Whirlpool gas range](#); it's about two years old. When you turn the broiler on it fires and it stays on for about thirty seconds, and then just shuts off.

JOHN SOWDEN

And this does it over and over again?

BILL

No, it just stays off.

JOHN SOWDEN

It just stays off?

BILL

Yup.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you initially start it, do you hear the sparking and then it does fire out?

BILL

Yeah, you can see the flame and everything.

JOHN SOWDEN

What I would suspect on that, there's a set of coils, they use a somewhat similar system in a dryer. The [gas valve](#) itself has got two solenoids that have to open in order to pass gas through the valve and then up into the [burner assembly](#). It sounds as if possibly one of those coils is dropping out and getting weak. What I would do is, once it fires, check the gas valve coils with an [ohmmeter](#) and see if they're open, if you've got an open circuit. But it sounds to me like the gas valve would be the issue there. If it's firing up once, and then under load the coils are failing.

BILL

Ok, thank you.

Inglis Refrigerator Water Not Dispensing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we go now to a question on an Inglis [refrigerator](#) from Jerry in Whitmore Lake on NewsTalk 760 WJR. Go ahead please, Jerry.

JERRY

Yeah, good morning. I can't get any water out of my door and my [icemaker](#) is working. I've got a clean [filter](#), new filter, and a good water supply. But all I hear is like a little humming noise when I push the cup against the dispenser.

JOHN SOWDEN

So when you do press it you do hear the humming noise?

JERRY

I do hear the humming noise, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. What I would suspect then is, when you press the lever and you hear the hum, that's telling me that the [water valve](#) is in fact being energized. It could be that the water valve

is mechanically failing, but more than likely what's happening is you have an ice restriction in the tank of the refrigerator. When you press that the water goes through a holding tank inside the refrigerator to keep the water cold, and then it goes up and through the door. So if you're running the [refrigerator temperatures](#) real cold, if you have it set, it's possible to get an ice condition in there. Or, if you just don't use the water in the door a lot, it causes an ice buildup.

JERRY

Yeah, I keep it real cold.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, that's probably what's happening. All it takes is a little ice blockage in one of those lines—they're small, quarter inch lines—coming through there at the top of the dispenser reservoir. Normally it's behind the [crisper drawers](#) in the very back wall of the refrigerator section. If you remove that you'll see either a coil of [plastic tubing](#) or a plastic molded tank, and it probably has a small ice buildup in there. You might want to try backing off the refrigerator temperature, and see if that problem goes away; if it does I would just try to keep the refrigerator between the 34 and 38 degrees, with 38 being plenty.

JERRY

Ok, that sounds great, I'll try that. Thanks a lot.

2005 GE Profile Microwave Making a Crackling Sound and Tripping the Breaker

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We go now to a question on a microwave from Estelle in Grosse Ile, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Estelle, go ahead please.

ESTELLE

Yes, I have a [GE Profile microwave](#). It's two years old. I put some bacon in it, and within ten seconds I got the crackling sound, it tripped the breaker. When I reloaded the breaker, everything has been fine and I have been able to use it several times since then. But I'm concerned because there was nothing, no metal in it that should have caused it to trip.

JOHN SOWDEN

So when did this happen, you've used it in the last week or two and it's been all right.

ESTELLE

Yes, it happened a week ago.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you said when you were running it you heard a crackling sound?

ESTELLE

Almost as if there was metal in it and you get that [arcing](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

And it wasn't the bacon?

ESTELLE

Well, I hope not.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. But you said you did hear kind of a cracking sound. Did you have any lightning in there? Did you see any [sparks inside it](#)?

ESTELLE

I didn't see any light or any lightning, I know what you're saying. I just heard the crackling and it was off, the whole unit was off and the breaker had been tripped.

JOHN SOWDEN

Hmm. And then after that it's working okay now?

ESTELLE

Yes, I've used it three or four times, gingerly.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I would say that it sounds like; normally from what you describe something in the high voltage system has failed. It could be the [magnetron](#) is weak, or you could have had a bad connection in there. Normally, if something shorts out inside the microwave it will take out the [fuse](#) off of the microwave itself, and then cause it to just be [dead](#); it doesn't matter if you reset the breaker in your home. With a microwave, I would recommend having somebody come out and inspect it, also do a test to see if it's cooking up to speed, and has the proper power. If it does it again I'd call for service on it.

ESTELLE

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sorry I can't be of more help, but [microwaves](#) are something I try to tend to tell people to leave to the professionals. There's a [capacitor](#) in there that stores energy, so even with the unit unplugged you can get a really nasty shock by working on them if you don't know what to touch and what not to touch.

ESTELLE

Oh, we're not going there!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Especially if it's crackling! Thanks for the call.

ESTELLE
Thank you.

JOHN MCCULLOCH
Just recently my microwave just went out! It was ten years old or something. I put it out on the curb because where I live they'll pick them up.

JOHN SOWDEN
Some guy like me came and picked it up?

JOHN MCCULLOCH
Well I put on it, "Danger, Do Not Touch", because I didn't know if the [capacitor](#) was discharged or not. And that was like a "Here It Is, Take It" sign, because it was gone before the garbage people even got there.

JOHN SOWDEN
Yeah. Well, you'd be surprised by how many problems are minor with those [microwaves](#). If it's a broken actuator for the [latch](#), or a [spring](#) or something, then it is a pretty simple repair. The problem you run into is that normally by the time you take something in that's a forty nine dollar or less microwave, and you have somebody look at it and diagnose it you could have bought a new one. So they've kind of become disposable, unfortunately.

1992 Admiral Top Mount Refrigerator Water Accumulating on the Bottom Shelf

JOHN MCCULLOCH
We'll go now to a question on an Admiral fridge from Chuck in Roseville on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Chuck.

CHUCK
I'm calling because I've got an [Admiral refrigerator](#) that's about fifteen years old. And every now and then I'll go into the refrigerator, the bottom shelf, and there'll be [water that accumulated](#) in there and it gets to be like an icy crust. I'll wipe it up, clean it up, and it will be fine for maybe a month or so. Then I'll go back in there to get something out of there and there's water there again. I don't understand where it would be coming from.

JOHN SOWDEN
This is a freezer on top?

CHUCK
Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. What's happening is the drain for your defrost system is restricted. And what happens is when it goes in defrost, the [water drips](#); there's a trough underneath the cooling coils there and then the water drains through a series of either troughs or a tube, and then it is supposed to drain into a [pan](#) underneath the refrigerator and evaporate into the room. If there's a restriction there, ice buildup or sometimes frozen peas, corn, all kinds of good stuff get in there. Then the water has to go somewhere, and it normally runs [down the back wall of the refrigerator and underneath the crisper drawers](#).

CHUCK

So how would I be able to correct that?

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends on your particular unit. On a lot of those the actual cooling coil is between the refrigerator and freezer section and the only way to get at that is to pull the freezer floor out, which means you take off all the doors and the center mullion strip between the two, and then you have to remove the floor of the freezer assembly to get at the drain trough and the cooling coils so it's a little more disassembly than just a few screws and pop off the back panel.

CHUCK

Ok, so I have the DTE energy insurance on the [refrigerator](#): on my stove, almost all my appliances. So that should be under warranty with them then, shouldn't it be?

JOHN SOWDEN

I can't speak for them. I would read the fine print, because a lot of times what they will cover—and again I'm not trying to speak for them—but I would say that most often those contracts are any replaceable failed parts, such as if the [fan motor](#) quits, or something like that. Some may or may not cover the [door gaskets](#), as with a lot of the after-market insurance programs. So if your compressor went out, more than likely you'd be in good shape and save a lot of money. For something like this, I'd call and ask them. Say, "I have a frozen drain, what do you think?" And see what it does for you.

CHUCK

Ok. Because like I said, the refrigerator's fifteen years old. What is the life expectancy of a fridge these days?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you're at that point, but frankly that unit will probably run for quite a few more years to come, especially if you clean the condenser on it. Really this is not abnormal after this period of time for that to start happening.

CHUCK

It's normal?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, after time the drain holes get plugged up, because as the [fans](#) are running they pull in a lot of dirt and dust from the room air.

CHUCK

Ok, well very good.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's worth looking into.

CHUCK

Well thank you and have a Merry Christmas!

Magic Chef Refrigerator Not Working and the Freezer is Only Cold Enough for Milk

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here with a question on a Magic Chef refrigerator/freezer, Norman in his car, on the Appliance Repair Show.

NORMAN

Good morning! [Magic Chef](#), do they still make parts or are they available for a fridge?

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends on what kind of parts. For a twenty-year-old unit, a lot of times the trim pieces and cosmetic pieces will be discontinued. But most functional parts would be something you could still get either directly from the manufacturer, or at times there are some after-market places that have parts like [fan motors](#).

NORMAN

Now the fridge became nothing and the freezer became the fridge, so I'm not sure even where to begin to look! The bottom one's completely out on it and the top part defrosted; but since its staying cold up there, my wife can keep milk and different stuff up there. The bottom part [doesn't work at all](#), however.

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally, from what you're describing, that's a defrost system failure. What's happened is, the coil in the freezer section has gotten a frost buildup and it's unable to have any air be blown down to your refrigerator section, which does the cooling in your refrigerator. So I would either suspect that you've got a defrost system failure and you've got a frost buildup on that coil, or the [freezer fan motor](#) has failed, and again, same thing there's no airflow. So what you have now is kind of like an ice box, where you've got the evaporator frozen up, so that's why you're only getting the forty degrees in your freezer section.

NORMAN

Now do you have parts available through your store, if that's what the problem is?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, we do— or if we don't, then I'm in big trouble! Yes, we do stock a lot of parts for those, even older machines. If you get the [model number](#) as it reads off the unit, there's also what they call the manufacturing number on that as well, and it's normally a five-digit number. You can put that into our website and if you for some reason you don't see that model come up you can always call our eight hundred number which is 888-34-FIXIT, and from there the people on the phone can look it up for you. Sometimes for these older units we have to go to the microfiche or the books, but we do stock a lot of parts for that, especially [defrost components](#) and things of that nature. Anything that's a wearing or breaking part, most of that stuff is still available.

NORMAN

Now is it worth replacing the parts in the fridge or just getting a new fridge for what it would cost to have all of this done?

JOHN SOWDEN

If you just replace the whole defrost system yourself, you'd probably have a hundred dollars in parts. If you had somebody come out and do it for you, it would probably be twice that amount, a few hundred bucks to have somebody come out and do it. The unit's older, and yet for a couple hundred bucks you'd probably be in pretty good shape. The other thing you can do is just have a serviceman come out; most will come out and diagnose the problem for a flat fee, and that point they can look the whole machine over and tell you, well you might need this, or this is worn. I'd have him inspect the [door gaskets](#) (those are normally fifty to seventy dollars a piece) and just make a general assessment of that refrigerator and give you a better answer.

NORMAN

Good, I appreciate all the information. Thank you very much!

2005 Frigidaire Refrigerator Making a Clicking Noise in the Fuse Box

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's a question on a two-year-old Frigidaire refrigerator from Garrett in Flint, on NewsTalk 760 WJR. Go ahead please, Garrett.

GARRETT

Good morning and Merry Christmas. I'm hoping you can help me out with a two-year-old [Frigidaire](#) that I've got. It's a brand new house and it's making a clicking noise in the panel box.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's making a clicking noise in your panel box?

GARRETT

Yeah, in the fuse box in the house.

JOHN SOWDEN

The refrigerator is making the clicking noise?

GARRETT

Yeah, and the reason why I know it's the [refrigerator](#) is because when I turn the circuit breaker off and unplug the refrigerator and then turn the circuit breaker back on, the [clicking noise](#) stops.

JOHN SOWDEN

Hmm. You said it's a new house?

GARRETT

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, from what you're describing, if it's only for the refrigerator, I would suspect the problem being in the breaker or the fuse box. Once you have a current draw through there, you could just have a loose connection. But, it has to do with the refrigerator as far as it's on that circuit, but if the noise is actually coming from the fuse box, I'd start there.

GARRETT

I had an electrician come out, and the electrician said he thinks it's in the refrigerator. I've tried to plug other things into that outlet, and it doesn't click; it only clicks when the refrigerator's plugged in.

JOHN SOWDEN

Hmm. Well you can pull the current draw on the [refrigerator](#) and see what you're looking at, if it's drawing excessive current, but even then it shouldn't do it. This is obviously an unusual problem. Normally the refrigerator itself, it will draw three or four amps when it's running, and I'm assuming this is a fifteen to twenty amp circuit, normally not enough to load it up and cause that kind of [noise](#) in the line. So I would start with just replacing the breaker, and rather than looking at the refrigerator. But the refrigerator, if it's running fine, cooling fine, and drawing the proper amount of current then I don't know what else is in there that would cause that situation, to make a noise in your fuse box.

GARRETT

Ok, so I replaced the breaker twice, and that didn't fix it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh. Well, at this point...you said the refrigerator's how old?

GARRETT

Two years.

JOHN SOWDEN
Two years old?

GARRETT
Yup.

JOHN SOWDEN
Well, it's out of the manufacturer's warranty. I would still have somebody come out and look at the [refrigerator](#) to pull a current draw on it; now that you've replaced the breakers twice I'd say you've probably alleviated that. And see if there's something that they can find that's drawing excessive current or building up a noise in there. But this is a pretty unusual problem.

GARRETT
Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN
Lucky you, huh?

GARRETT
Exactly, it figures. Ok, thanks for your help.

JOHN SOWDEN
I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help, but I'd have to be there for this one. And even then, it sounds like it's a pretty weird situation.

1999 Amana Refrigerator Dispenser Water Taste's bad

JOHN MCCULLOCH
And here's another question on a refrigerator, this time an Amana, from Mark in Chesterfield, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Mark.

MARK
I've got an [Amana refrigerator](#); it's about eight years old. The dispenser in the door's got kind of a plastic-y or almost an oily taste when I get the water out of the door. Can you shed any light on that?

JOHN SOWDEN
Do you have a [filter](#) for this unit?

MARK
Yes, I do, I actually put a new one in recently. I should also let you know that I have a reverse osmosis system.

JOHN SOWDEN
Ok.

MARK

It goes up into that feed to the refrigerator as well.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, the R-O systems...do you have a pump on the R-O system?

MARK

I think it's just by pressure.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, because a lot of times the icemaker and water in the door will not operate properly with an R-O system because you do not have the proper pressure at the [water valve](#) to shut it off. Some of the newer R-Os do work a little better; the ones that don't you can buy a pump that actually increases the water pressure at the tank for your R-O. If you have a [bad taste](#) in that unit, I would suspect that the problem is in the reservoir for the water. If you remove the back panel of the refrigerator or the [crisper drawers](#), normally they hide it behind there, there's a little shield. I'd inspect the tank. You might find a sediment or kind of a—I don't want to say a mold buildup—but it can get kind of a black; it's from the water sitting there. If that's the case, all you can do is replace that tank and replace the water lines. Basically start over again. You can try flushing bleach through it and all the other good stuff, and I've heard limited success on that. The best way is to just make sure the water getting to it is cleaned up, and then replace the whole water holding system.

MARK

Ok, and if I take the back of the refrigerator off I should be able to find this [tank](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yup. You'll see—

MARK

Ok, because I have a separate line that runs to the sink for the reverse osmosis system and that tastes fine but this one here...all right sounds like a good idea, then. Thank you. And have a Merry Christmas.

1980 Panasonic Microwave with No Problems But Should It Be Replaced

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And as promised, here's Sally in Novi, with a question on a twenty-five year old microwave on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Sally.

SALLY

Hi. Yes, I've got this [Panasonic microwave](#). It's got to be twenty-five years old. I've never had a day of trouble with it. I'm just wondering if I should replace it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well...

SALLY

It's just a one-knob, you close the door and turn on the [knob](#) and you've got your power.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, I'd say, it sounds like you've got one of the basic no-frills microwaves. If you've got twenty five years out of it, I'd see if you can get twenty-six; I wouldn't throw it away or get rid of it. The newer ones may be a little more energy efficient, but [microwaves](#) do draw quite a bit of current anyway when they're running. I wouldn't throw it away just because it's old. At this point, you're getting all that return money, and whatever you buy today may or may not be built in the same style. I'm sure this is a pretty heavy unit to lug around if you were to move.

SALLY

Uh-huh.

JOHN SOWDEN

But I wouldn't throw it away just on principle. I'm of the belief that they've kind of found their useful lifespan once they break down where it's beyond economical repair. Since that hasn't happened yet, I would keep plugging along with it.

SALLY

Ok. Sounds wonderful!

Kenmore Side by Side Refrigerator Door Handle Is Coming Loose

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Ok, here's a question on a Kenmore...what?

JOHN SOWDEN

A Kenmore what? It's a refrigerator.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Ok, it's a refrigerator, from Howard in Ann Arbor, on the Appliance Repair Show. Howard, go ahead please.

HOWARD

Hello! I've got a handle on my [Kenmore refrigerator](#) on the refrigerator side; it's a side by side, and it's coming loose, and there's no obvious way to tighten it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. I'm looking at a breakdown of it; it looks like the [handle](#) mounts to a bracket that's mounted to the door. I'm trying to figure out, this one here, it looks like you may have to

go in through, and I hate to tell you this, the inner door panel on this machine. If you fold back the [door gasket](#) on this, look and see if you see a series of screws around the perimeter of the door. If you do you'll have to loosen up the inner door panel in order to gain access to that door.

HOWARD

Will I do any harm pulling the gasket back?

JOHN SOWDEN

Just fold it back. Just open the door and fold it back and see if there are screws. If there's not then it's a foamed in place door, and it looks like at that point the whole thing is mounted to some clips that you might have to lift up and unsnap the handle. If you go to our website, repairclinic.com and in the "[Contact Us](#)" section you can go in and give us your email address and we can send you a breakdown of this so you can look at a picture of how the [door handle](#) comes off which is probably the best thing, at this point, so you can see what you're dealing with.

HOWARD

You have to take the door off?

JOHN SOWDEN

You might have to separate the inner and outer door panel, which is not a lot of fun. If you fold back the [door gasket](#) and you don't see a bunch of screws, which means that inner panel is foamed in place.

HOWARD

No screws there.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. So then you have to disassemble it from the outside. It looks like the [door handle](#) is mounted to a series of clips, and sometimes you can get in there with a credit card and pop off the handle. But again if you go to the website, we can look this up for you in the service website on what to do exactly so you don't mar the finish of your door. I'd hate to see that goofed up for you.

HOWARD

Doesn't sound easy, right?

JOHN SOWDEN

Knowing is half the battle, so sometimes there's some tricks and stuff that we can lookup according to your model and see if there's any particular service flashes and/or advice to remove that specific style of handle.

1997 Whirlpool Refrigerator Water is Accumulating inside the Bottom

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And with a question on a [Whirlpool refrigerator](#), here's John in Pinckney, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi John, go ahead, please.

JOHN

Ah, yes, I appreciate you taking my call this morning. I have a Whirlpool refrigerator; it's probably ten years old. It freezes over on the top, and then the [water comes down on the inside of the refrigerator](#). This is similar to a call you had earlier.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

JOHN

However, we've cleaned out the tube that runs down to the bottom and we took the bottom out and defrosted all of it. I'm wondering if it's possible if it could be either the defroster coil itself or a [timer](#) on the defroster, that's not allowing it to run long enough and then eventually what will happen is it will ice up and back up after probably four or five days and then it just continues to push the water back down into the refrigerator.

JOHN SOWDEN

There might be a repair kit for this particular unit. First of all, there are a few things you can do. Make sure that the [trough](#) is lined up with the drain hole. Sometimes if that's not happening the water drips into the liner instead of down the drain. If that's okay, at times, you can add literally just a piece of aluminum around the [defrost heater](#) and stick it down the drain. There's a part available through [Whirlpool](#), it's just a [defrost drain strap kit](#), basically, and it's just a piece of aluminum that wraps around the defrost heater and goes down the drain. You can use a piece of twelve-gauge wire as well, hard wire, to do the same thing: make a little shepherd's hook on one side, and it does help transfer a little heat down the drain. The other thing that could be occurring is that you might have a situation where the air ducts that go into your refrigerator section are not sealed off properly and you're getting too much cold air in the drain area, which causes it to freeze over. That depends on the model. If you give us the [model number](#) for that we can look this up and see if there are any service flashes or something on this and if that's particular, a lot of times there will be like a foam insulation kit, which is just a series of peel and stick foam that you would put around the duct assembly for the refrigerator in the refrigerator ceiling. I'd start first with just the drain strap. That most often will cure the problem.

JOHN

Ok. Is this something that they had a problem with those particular models? It's almost ten years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, this is something that at times, after stuff has been in production, with any manufacturer; they find that this problem is occurring on a certain percentage of models. A lot of times it's even particular to where it's at, if it's in a high-humidity area you could have one problem that shows up that takes time to.... for instance, if your unit is in

Florida and you've got a lot of moist heat all day long, your [refrigerator](#) is going to perform and defrost differently as far as the amount of water and things than it would if you're in...

JOHN

If it gets enough cold air into the refrigerator itself, that water will get in the glass [shelves](#) there and it will actually freeze the water, right on the shelves.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'd start with the strap. If that doesn't help out then just go to our website, [repairclinic.com](#), and we can see if there's anything additional that they recommend for doing this.

JOHN

Ok. You say this strap is something that's available from Whirlpool?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. It's called a [defrost drain heater kit](#). Again, if you don't see it on the website, because we don't have it with every model, it's just one of the things that the technicians carry, and it works. I've used these on just about every brand out there, where once in a while you get one where the drain just ices over and you need to add more heat. You can again, take a piece of twelve gauge copper wire and peel off the insulation and just cut a two or three inch piece, just enough to get it down the drain and hook it around the defrost heater and run it down the drain hole, and again that will generally prevent it from icing over.

JOHN

Ok and I can get this from you rather than [Whirlpool](#), then?

JOHN SOWDEN

Your choice, but we certainly appreciate the business. It's not a very expensive piece, and again you can do it with something you have around the house, the copper wire and in many, many circumstances...in fact many of the manufacturers have basically a copper wire and a small piece of five-eighths copper pipe that you stick in the drain, that's their repair kit.

JOHN

Ok, because this thing's just driving me nuts because I've taken it apart three or four times and thawed it all out and put it all back together and you think it's doing good and then like I say about five or six days later, here it comes again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I'd start there. If you still have the problem then I'd dig in and see if there's anything specific. Sometimes they have again these little foam gaskets that you can put in around the duct assembly that just keep the air going where it's supposed to go instead of kind of bleeding off into the drain assembly. Normally, that stuff shows up right away,

though, if the machine's got a problem, while it's still under warranty. I'd say over time the liner might be getting wet, and that's where I'd go with that drain strap.

JOHN

I see. I thank you and have a Merry Christmas.

2007 Sharp Over-the-Range Microwave with Only One Speed

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here with a question on a [Sharp microwave](#), Frank from Kimball, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Frank.

FRANK

It appears that there's only one speed in this microwave, there's a high and low [switch](#) on it but I can't tell the difference between the two speeds so I'm guessing one of them is not working, probably the low.

JOHN SOWDEN

The, you say there's a high and low speed? Is one a defrost mode?

FRANK

No, I think it's just for the fan mode. It's one of those [over-the-oven type microwave](#) that has the fans in it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, ok.

FRANK

Do you want to hear it? There's high, and there's low, and I don't tell a whole lot of difference between them.

JOHN SOWDEN

No, there is not a lot of difference. Most often you either have a switch that sends the current to a different speed in the [motor](#), or they will put a resistor in the low speed which this reduces the amount of current.

FRANK

What do you think is wrong with this one?

JOHN SOWDEN

I'd have to see the print on that particular unit to see which particular style they're using to reduce the fan speed. It could be that the motor windings are shorted together, and all you have is high speed. So I would say it's either in the switch or it's in the resistor; sometimes the resistor is in the [switch](#), in which case you'd need the whole one.

FRANK

It's brand new. It came with a brand new house.

JOHN SOWDEN

If it's brand new, then you're off the hook. I'd call for factory service and have them come out and look at it.

FRANK

Oh, ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, there's always a warranty. A lot of times on a new house, even the appliance may or may not be a year or two old, because as they build the house they get these new appliances, but most manufacturers will honor the occupancy date of when you took ownership of the home as the starting date for the warranty. So make sure you have that information and if the technician needs to make a copy of it or whatever so they can submit that with their claim and get paid by the manufacturer.

FRANK

Right. Ok. It hasn't been a big issue but it might be down the road if that one-speed quits working and I'll have none.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it could be just something that's not plugged in, a loose wire, especially in new homes the stuff lays around and moves from room to room before they install it. So you never really know what happens to it.

FRANK

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if it's brand new, I'd take advantage of that warranty that you paid for.

FRANK

Ok, I'll try that.

1980 Kenmore Oven Knobs Need To Be Replaced

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We go now to a question on [oven knobs](#), from Bob in Saint Clair Shores, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Bob.

BOB

I have a twenty-five year plus old [Kenmore](#) continuous self-cleaning oven. The knobs up top that control the burners, a couple of them have broken. We've tried everything from Crazy Glue to Gorilla Glue and it's just not working. My local store, A&E Appliances,

didn't have anything in stock, [Sears](#) doesn't have anything, and so I'm wondering if you have any suggestions as to where I might find them.

JOHN SOWDEN

According to the model you provided, these parts are discontinued. They don't make the knobs any more. That's actually an old [Roper](#) stove, and since then [Whirlpool](#) and [GE](#) both have, through the years taken over parts distribution for that, and they have discontinued those. Now they do make—you can buy some knob kits that you basically get different inserts, different dial configurations, and you kind of make your own knob type of a situation. We do have some in stock, as far as the [universal kits](#), but they don't cover all the specific ones. The ones for the [oven thermostat](#) are going to be the trickiest ones, because obviously your 350 degrees needs to really be 350 degrees if you're not going to burn everything and that needs to line up properly. Most of the ones for the stove itself, the [surface burners](#), the high-low, most of those you can duplicate and go from there. But yeah, there is another company called Robert Shaw that makes a knob kit, and you can buy all the individual components: the inserts, the knob itself, and then the dials, which are kind of a peel and stick, and most of those are ten or twelve bucks a piece. The knobs, originally, for your unit were, before they were discontinued, thirty or forty dollars a piece, and that's normally not unusual, as things get older and they don't run another production, the price goes up. Not a lot of good news for you today as far as that goes. Some of the even major home stores have these knob kits, you might want to try picking one up and seeing if you can get it to work. Change them all, so obviously you don't have one that's black and the other ones are white or silver or whatever; kind of change it as an assembly. And even then, some of those are hard to find to match up the oven thermostat knobs. But unfortunately, due to the age, they cut out the parts for it.

BOB

Ok, great, well thanks very much guys. Have a great holiday season and keep up the good work.

Maytag Microwave Sparked Resulting In a Hole in the Door

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We're going to get right to the phones on a question on a [Maytag microwave](#), with Eva in Southgate, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Eva.

EVA

Hi. I'm calling because there was a [spark in my microwave](#) caused by foil. And there's a little hole on the plastic covering of the door, and I'm just wondering if it's safe to use or can that be repaired?

JOHN SOWDEN

There's a hole in the door?

EVA

Yes, in the plastic on the side of the inside of the microwave. But then there's still plastic on the outside of the door and there's no hole in that. There's like two layers of plastic.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I would have to see the door in order to say if it's safe to use or not. If in doubt with microwaves I always say replace the [door](#), replace that inner choke assembly, just to make sure. You can have somebody come out and leak-check it for you. This is an [over the range unit](#)?

EVA

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, so taking it in somewhere...a lot of places will do it for a nominal fee but then you have to wrestle the thing off the wall. Do you have any other broken appliances in the home where you might be having a service man come out anyway?

EVA

Not right now.

JOHN SOWDEN

I was going to say, that's always advantageous, if you have something like that. If you have somebody come out for the washer or dryer, just tell them to take a quick peek and do a leak-check on the [microwave](#) as well.

EVA

Oh.

JOHN SOWDEN

Without being able to see it, I don't want to tell you, yeah go ahead and use it, or no, don't use it, because I'd have to see where it's at and the configuration of the unit to know whether or not it's safe. And again, I'd still leak check it and make sure that that's the case. But given that it's a microwave and it's the door issue, I'd always lean on the side of safety and at least have a professional come out and look at it and make an assessment.

EVA

And the door can't be removed?

JOHN SOWDEN

You normally can replace the [door](#) as an assembly, but that's an expensive situation. At times they come in pieces, but again you're still having somebody that's going to separate the door, replace the inner component, and then reattach the outer component. Again, if it needs a new door, you're probably planning on spending at least a hundred bucks.

EVA

Ok, thank you.

Triton Dishwasher Not Cleaning the Dishes on the Top Rack

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we're going to take a call now on a [Triton dishwasher](#), from Kathy in Lake Orion, on the Appliance Repair Show.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's a Triton dishwasher.

KATHY

I have a dishwasher and I'm having problems with it. It's [not cleaning the dishes](#) on the top rack.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok.

KATHY

So I don't know what to do. My husband and I, we checked the filter out at the bottom, and took that apart and that's okay. It seems like the water is draining out properly, there's nothing in there. We do have softer water and well water, and I don't know if something could be going on with, I don't know what you call those levers where the water comes out? I call them water wands, there's one on the bottom, one in the middle and one on the top.

JOHN SOWDEN

The [wash arms](#)?

KATHY

Yes, the wash arms. Ok! What do you think we should do? I've got thirteen people coming on Christmas Day, and it seems like, oh shoot! I should have called the service person.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I warned everybody last week, it's time to call early. You say you removed the filter assembly, that's the cover in the back of the [dishwasher](#)?

KATHY

There's a filter on the very base of the dishwasher, you know, and we took that apart and it seems like there's nothing in that area there. It seems like it's pumping the water out. I just don't understand it's like I'm putting dishes on the bottom, but on the top [it just doesn't clean](#). It seems like I was experimenting a little bit, I put some extra water in there—

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, yes add hot water to it in the main wash cycle and see if you notice any...normally you'll hear the difference of the wash ability of it.

KATHY

Ok, how much water should I add extra? Would that be like when it starts filling up?

JOHN SOWDEN

Here are a few things, as a rule of thumb. I would start it up. Once you get to the main wash cycle, and, normally, it will fill and drain once or twice before you get to the main wash cycle. Open up the door, and you should have, oh probably, at least a half-inch to an inch of water across the whole bottom of the dishwasher.

KATHY

A half-inch to an inch?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. If you do not, then I would suspect the [water inlet valve](#) is restricted, or that it's the hard water. Now, the reason is, the unit is on a time fill. Even though there's a float in there, the [float](#) is a safety device, [it doesn't fill](#) up till it's full, and then turn off on the float, it fills up on time. And, if the valve is restricted, and the ninety second fill, you're not going to get enough water in there.

KATHY

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok, so at that point, stop it running, add a few pitchers of hot water and close the door, fire it back up, and, normally, you can hear the difference. If not, I would also look and make sure the water is fairly clean and not very dirty at that point. There should be some debris in there, but it still might be [draining improperly](#) or intermittently, and that's why you have a lot of residue on the upper rack. If that's the case, on the back of the unit, underneath the filter you looked at in the center, there's a little plug that unscrews and inside there there's a [check valve](#). That is something that, over time, can wear out and cause the thing to sound like it's going through the cycles and everything, but it won't drain all the water out or it will drain intermittently; it does not divert the water through the system properly.

KATHY

Ok.

JOHN SOWDEN

I know this first hand because I had to change mine about four or five months ago. So that's something I would, they call it a piston assembly. I would start there as well. You can start with the first easy thing, which is add a little more water and see if you notice a difference. And then I would inspect that piston assembly. Given the age of yours, if you use it quite a bit, that might be where your problem lies. Sometimes it works fine, but

that has to seal properly to divert the water out for the drain, and if it doesn't, then you end up with the crusties on the [upper rack](#). I think that's what I've heard it referred to.

KATHY

Yeah, that's what it is, is crusties, that's a good description. Hmm. Ok, now is it very easy to do that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure it is. It just unscrews in the back. It's a little plug about an inch and a half across. Once you remove that there are a few screws to remove that cage. In the center of it you'll see the plug assembly, and then you unscrew the cap and the piston is underneath it. You can do it in ten minutes.

KATHY

Ok, well we're going to try it out. We'll do these different things because we want to try and fix it ourselves.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you put the [model number](#) as it reads off the unit itself, look around the door frame, you'll see a tag; go to our website, [repairclinic.com](#), and you can see a picture of that piston assembly, and I'm assuming by the unit you have (I don't have the model) that yours has one because it's fairly common in that vintage, and you can see what you're looking for at that point.

KATHY

Ok, very good. Gee, I thank you so much!

1997 Sears Chest Freezer Not Freezing

JOHN SOWDEN

Right now, we're going to go to a question on a [Sears freezer](#), from Dave in Saint Clair Shores, here on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Dave. Go ahead, please.

DAVE

Yeah, I've got a Sears freezer. I'd had it shut off for about ten years. When I went to kick it on, the motor works, everything, compressor works, but [it doesn't freeze](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a [chest freezer](#)?

DAVE

Yes, it's a chest freezer.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah.

DAVE

And, I had a company come over here and take a look at it for me, and they told me the valves are frozen. So they said I need a new [compressor](#), but I don't believe it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, you said you haven't used this in ten years?

DAVE

Right. Well, a good six years, since the wife passed away.

JOHN SOWDEN

You say the unit does run, though, you hear the compressor running?

DAVE

Oh, yeah she runs all right!

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, it could have bad valves in the compressor. But more than likely what happens is, after sitting for so long, the entire refrigerant leaked out of the system. And the reason for that is, in a chest freezer, the condenser that most people have on the back or underneath your refrigerator, is actually in the liner. So when they run, if you have a [chest freezer](#) at home and it's running you actually feel the side walls get hot. And that's where the condenser is mounted, it's actually part of the cabinet, and they're foamed in place. There's steel tubing that they use in there. After a period of time, especially sitting there with no pressure in there, that steel can start to deteriorate and rust, and you get a few pit holes in there, and then the refrigerant slowly leaks out, and basically you're pumping air instead of refrigerant through your system, which is probably where he hooked his gauges up to it and read it, so he probably thought the valves were bad because...

DAVE

Oh, he didn't check anything. All he said is that it's working but you're valves are full. He didn't even put no gauges or nothing on it!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, either one is pretty much terminal because a new compressor is something that's going to be more expensive than what the cost of a new freezer would be. And if you could use the existing compressor and you can repair these, they have kits out that you can put an external condenser on it like you have on a lot of [refrigerators](#), that black [grill](#) on the back of it...

DAVE

I see.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you can use those. Again, you're looking at I would say at least two to four hundred dollars to do that, and you can normally go buy a decent freezer for a few hundred bucks these days. So, he didn't give you bad advice, it's probably shot either way. Sitting for a long period of time, for anything— cars, refrigerators, anything—is not a good thing. Especially for [dishwashers](#), because the seals dry out.

DAVE

Ok. All right, then. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

I wish we had better news for you.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'm the bad news guy today.

Electric Dryer Blowing Fuses

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Marianne from Hamtramck is next here on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Marianne.

MARIANNE

Yes, this is Marianne. I'm having a problem with my [dryer](#). What happened was, the [belt](#) broke, and I had a friend of mine who went to Home Depot and put another belt on. But every time I get ready to dry clothes now I blow a fuse.

JOHN SOWDEN

It blows the fuse in your fuse box in the home or the fuse in the dryer?

MARIANNE

The fuse box in the home.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. It blows the fuse. Is this a gas or an electric?

MARIANNE

It's electric.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. I would say, every time you go to start it, [it blows the fuse](#)?

MARIANNE

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

You might have a wire or something touching the frame inside the unit, especially if you've just—

MARIANNE
Inside the dryer?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. If you've just disassembled it to change the [belt](#), it's possible that something got pulled off or something got disheveled in there and you could have something that's touching the frame. That's why it would immediately take out the circuit as soon as you energize the [motor](#) and the [heater](#) housing.

MARIANNE
Ok, so have somebody come back and check that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I would have somebody come out and look at it and see if there wasn't something that was either miss-wired, a lot of times when you disassemble them you have to disconnect the door switch, so it could be that was miss-wired. You pinched a wire putting it back together, something in there. If the only difference before is that it was working fine, you changed the belt, and now [it's blowing fuses](#), then something in the interim there, or the disassembly from changing the belt, probably caused it to fail electrically now.

MARIANNE
Ok. All right, thanks a lot and Merry Christmas.

GE Front-Load Washing Machine Leaking Water

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And, we go now to a question on a [GE washer](#) that's leaking water, from Kern in Oxford, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Kern, go ahead please.

KERN

Yeah, I got this [front-loading washing machine](#). It's one of these water efficiency ones. [It's leaking](#) and it looks like it's leaking between the two halves where they go through, and I thought, is there any common things that fail on these? I'd like a little insight before I have a bunch of parts lying on the floor.

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a GE front loader. And it seems to be leaking from where?

KERN

It looks like it's leaking from between the two halves of the housing. You know, underneath you have two halves go through where the main drum...

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, you have the front and rear shell assembly, and between there is a rubber gasket, but that normally doesn't leak. You might want to look at the back of the machine. It might be leaking out the rear bearing or the rear seal of that and then running down the back of the rear shell and then dripping off where the two meet, and that might be where...my point is, it might look like it's leaking in one place and the water might be coming from somewhere else.

KERN

Yeah that's why I'm worried, that's why I'm calling. So you're saying check the bearing in the back.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, if you see where it's been running down the back, then you need a new bearing and seal assembly and that is not going to be a fun, if you decide to do it yourself, or cheap, if you decide to have it done.

KERN

Ok. I'll look at it a little closer; I'll look at that bearing area. But the seal in half you somewhat see the water, it's coming down from about halfway up the unit.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. And again, where the [water drips off](#) of, and where the water is actually originating in washers and a lot of machines like that, can sometimes be two different places. I've even had a lot of service calls where I go out and people tell me their washer is leaking and I find out that the pipe, the trap underneath their laundry tub is actually cracked and the water is running on the floor and underneath the washing machine and people actually think it's coming from the [washing machine](#). So you have to find the source first.

KERN

Ok. Good enough, I appreciate it. Thank you.