

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—January 13, 2008

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GE Dishwasher Is Not Dispensing All the Liquid Detergent

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We will start things out this morning with a question on a [GE dishwasher](#) from Shaysha in Macomb Township, here on NewsTalk 760 WJR.

SHAYSHA

The [dishwasher](#) that I have is relatively new, but it appears that the [soap dispenser](#) area of the door appears to be opening but all of the soap isn't coming out. It is a liquid

detergent, and what's happening is I end up with soap that's dried and hardened on to some silverware below, sometimes dishes in the dishwasher. It's kind of gross.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you say it opens, but it does not wash the soap out of the cup?

SHAYSHA

Right! Yeah, when the cycle is done the [door](#) is open, but there's always some left over, and it's still even pretty.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, what happens is once the door opens the [wash arms](#) turning are supposed to wash that detergent out of the cup and then mix with the rest of the water in the tank. So if it's [not washing](#) out the soap cup, I would suspect that the [wash arms are not turning](#), or the [unit isn't filling](#) and draining properly. At times, this can be caused from a [silverware basket](#) that's got a hole in the bottom of it, and you throw a knife in there and the knife sticks through the bottom of the basket and stops the wash arm physically from turning, so I would inspect that and make sure you don't have holes in the bottom of the silverware basket. The other thing that, on occasion, can happen is if you have a favorite dish or spoon holder or something that you put in the same spot, it can be physically [restricting the water spray](#) from that area. Otherwise if it's not a user issue as far as how you're loading the dishwasher, then it's that the wash arms aren't turning, or you're [not getting enough water](#) in the unit to generate enough power to clean off that area. So the first thing I'd do is inspect the silverware basket and notice when you load it, where things go. After that I would just run it and pull up a chair and listen to it for a while and you should hear the unit fill and drain several times throughout the cycle. You may even want to open it up periodically and see if there's any water in the machine when it is washing: if something's caught in the [drain valve](#) or something like that, the water will fill and then run right back out. So what's happening is it sounds like it's doing what it's supposed to be doing in that it's going through the cycles and the [motor](#) is turning, but the water is not staying inside the dishwasher.

SHAYSHA

Okay. I've noticed an [excessive humming](#) while it's running as well, but it used to be a really quiet dishwasher and it's not so quiet anymore.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and that could be just from the unit running dry, basically. It sounds like you're either [not getting water](#) into the machine, or the water is coming in and then running right back out, which is normally something caught in the [pump assembly](#) or the drain valve on that which opens and closes a flapper to keep the water in or let it out is sticking open. Again, as the water comes in, normally it will fill for about ninety seconds, and then wash for several minutes, then drain and fill again. It's possible that the water's coming in and when the [motor](#) starts it pumps it all out. So, first see if you're getting water into it; then, if you are, and it's leaving then you need to figure out why it's leaving, and it's normally something caught in the pump.

SHAYSHA

Okay. I should be able to tell that maybe by opening it up in the middle of the cycle.

JOHN SOWDEN

More observation helps in the diagnosis of it.

SHAYSHA

All right. Well thank you.

JOHN SOWDEN

So that's your instructions for today.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And if you find out it is something in the [pump](#) and you want to know more information you can go to [Repairclinic.com](#) and put your [model number](#) in and you'll see a [schematic](#) of exactly what it looks like inside.

JOHN SOWDEN

You'll see a picture of all the common parts for your unit and we also have what we call our [detailed appliance illustrations](#) which show a pictorial breakdown of your machine as well as if you mouse over those components, they will show you a specific picture of where it's at, where it's located, and the common names used to describe the parts. So if you are calling in to order the part, or you just want to know what they really call the thing, we have all the nomenclature stated on there. It gives you a better idea of where things are located and the general breakdown of the machine.

SHAYSHA

Well thank you.

1998 Amana Refrigerator/Freezer Is Freezing Everything in the Refrigerator Section and Has Frost Buildup In The Back Of the Freezer

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And with a question on an [Amana refrigerator/freezer](#), here's Darryl in Clinton Township, here on NewsTalk 760 WJR. Good morning, Darryl.

DARRYL

I have an Amana with the [freezer on the bottom](#). I'm going to guess it's about ten or twelve years old, maybe even older, I just don't remember for sure. The problem began when it started to [freeze everything](#), even in the upper compartment where it's supposed to be refrigerated, not frozen. And then all of a sudden it [began not to cool at all](#), and then in the back of the freezer there was all this ice that began to build up in the back of the freezer. So I just pulled the plug yesterday and I'm letting it thaw out now. So I'm not sure if it's a major problem or if I should just plug it back in and start over.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, running all the time, generally, is from either a [thermostat](#) sticking or something of that nature, or it's the defrost system is starting to fail; what happens is you're not circulating enough air across the control for it to turn off properly. And then after a short period of time there, then you start to [lose the temperature](#) all together. You say you did notice a frost buildup on the back of the freezer?

DARRYL

Yes I did.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, so you've got a defrost system failure, and generally by unplugging it is the easiest way to do it, just let it de-ice and thaw. You might want to also [inspect underneath](#) the unit, where the [drain pan](#) is, because if you have a lot of frost in there, it's possible to overflow that pan and get a lot of water on the floor. So if you have a wood floor or something of that nature. What you can do is slide out the machine and remove the back cover and take some sponges or something and soak up the water in the pan there to make sure you don't make a big mess out of it. From there, generally there's three components from the [defrost system](#), which is the [heater](#), the [defrost thermostat](#), and then the [defrost timer](#) or the [defrost control circuit board](#). You can check the heater with an [ohmmeter](#) to see if it's open or broken. To check the thermostat, the best time to do that is when the unit is frozen, or in the closed position to see if it's closing. Or you can take the carpet bomb effect and just replace all the components for the defrost system, the board, the heater, and just start over. Normally—depending on the unit—for under one hundred dollars worth of parts, you can just replace them and back in operation you go. The other thing you want to make sure of though, that can cause the same symptoms, is the [freezer fan](#) is turning, because that not turning will also cause a frost buildup and the [unit to not cool](#) properly.

DARRYL

Okay. We have the thermostat adjustment in the [upper compartment](#), and when I try to adjust that one way or the other to increase or decrease temperature; it didn't seem to make any difference at all. So I don't know if that means anything or not.

JOHN SOWDEN

Basically you have a [thermostat](#) in the freezer that sets the temperature of the freezer, and then the one you're describing in the refrigerator is what they call the [damper assembly](#). And all that is, is a gateway or a little door that's thermostatically operated, and what it does is it chokes off the airflow from the freezer when you start run down thirty five degrees or so in your [refrigerator](#), and it opens it up. So it's thermostatically operated, but it's mechanically opening up a door and closing it. And that's how come you can have situations where one section can be working fine and the other one is not, is that damper sticking. The [ice and frost buildup](#) on your back wall, normally by the time you see it physically on the back wall it's been failing to defrost for several days.

DARRYL

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's where I'd start out, in that arena there, and see.

DARRYL

Okay. Thank you for your time.

1994 Kenmore Gas Stove Not Igniting When Set To Bake

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here with a question on a [Kenmore gas stove](#), Brad in Belleview, on News Talk 760 WJR.

BRAD

I have a fourteen-year-old Kenmore [gas stove](#). My broiler operates and my stovetop burners operate, but when I turn the oven set to bake it [does not ignite](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Does the igniter glow? Do you see the [igniter](#) glowing in there?

BRAD

No, I don't think so. I don't see the red at the bottom.

JOHN SOWDEN

You have what they call the waist-high broiler, then; you have a separate broiler on the ceiling of the unit?

BRAD

Yeah, there's a whole other unit way at the top of the oven, right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So they're independent of each other, the bake and broil?

BRAD

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you have two [igniters](#) in your unit, and if you don't see the lower one glowing, most often that is because the igniter itself is broken or open, if you check it with a [meter](#). On occasion, the gas valve itself can have an open circuit or a bad coil inside the [gas valve](#), but ninety percent of the time, the igniter is what's caused the problem. Now, is this the original igniter in the unit?

BRAD

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, normally, depending on how much you use it, etc., you'll get five or ten years out of it. That's about the norm. If you remove that, you can normally, if it's physically broken, you can see the crack in the ceramic on the igniter itself. You'll normally see another burn spot. Not always, though, so you want to also check it with a meter if you suspect it. But I think if you pull that out the problem will be pretty evident. Most of them run between fifty and seventy five dollars. If you get the [model number](#) complete as it reads off the unit and go to our website, Repairclinic.com and enter that in, you can get price and availability on the igniter, and go from there.

BRAD

Now where would I look for this [igniter](#)? Is it in the back of the stove?

JOHN SOWDEN

No, it's normally underneath the oven floor. If you remove the [broiler drawer](#), if you have one, and look under there you may see it, the storage drawer. If not then you'll have to remove the oven floor, and normally that just lifts out. There may be a few locking tabs in the front or back that you, you know to slide towards you and then lift the floor out to get at that.

BRAD

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it's basically under what they call the flame spreader, and that's the [oven](#) floor.

BRAD

Okay. Thank you very much!

1996 GE Profile Gas Range Grates Are Discolored and Wants to Use a High Temperature Paint Instead Of Replacing the Grates

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we go now for a question on a [GE Profile gas range](#) with John in Stockbridge, here on the Appliance Repair Show.

JOHN

I have a GE Profile [gas cook top](#) that works flawlessly. The only question I have is about a cosmetic solution I'm looking for. This is approximately ten or twelve years old. The cast iron [grates](#), they were real shiny black when the appliance was new, and of course over the years they've gotten dull-looking and not as nice as I'd like them to be. Rather than buy new grates, a friend of mine suggested a high-temperature [paint](#) to repaint those grates. Is there something that you know of off the top of your head that's available for that?

JOHN SOWDEN

The high-temperature paint, like for gas grills and stuff of that nature, I've had people use that on [stovetops](#), the main tops, and generally over time it will still peel off and not adhere very well. Obviously depending on what you use. The problem is when it starts to release off the grate, you can have it burn onto the [pan](#). So once that enamel has been compromised, the porcelain dip on that, there's not a whole lot you can do cosmetically. You can try cleaning them and we do sell a great [cleaner](#), which is a package of cleaner that you fill up the sink or a bowl and put the grates in there and it helps dissolve all the grease residue and things of that nature. But the actual [grates](#) are chipped and you're down to the bare metal, about all you can do is replace the grates. Unfortunately, those are not cheap. They run twenty to fifty dollars a piece.

JOHN

I know they're rather expensive and the grates themselves are not chipped, it's just the discoloration of the black finish that I was looking to alleviate and get that shiny gloss back to it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Again, over time I'm not sure you're going to be able to do that. And the spray [paint](#), I haven't heard of a lot of great results with that. If it starts to come off and sticks to the bottom of your pans, then you have two problems.

JOHN

Oh, that would be two problems! Well, I'll try to put some elbow grease into them and get that shiny gloss black, but if not then I'll look into some other solutions.

JOHN SOWDEN

The good thing is at least they're black. A lot of the newer units they have white grates and gray grates, and they really show the heat and the scuffing. The black is the easiest one to cover up.

1983 Kenmore Oven Light Is Not Coming On and the Elements Are Not Heating Up

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's a question on a twenty five year old [Kenmore oven](#) from Beth in Farmington Hills on NewsTalk 760 WJR.

JOHN SOWDEN

What's the problem that you're having on your [stove](#) today?

BETH

I went to turn on the oven yesterday, and you know how on the [control panel](#) the oven light will come on? The oven light did not come on and the elements are [not heating](#) at all. It was just used the day previously and the oven worked fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

And this has a [thermostat](#)? Do you have knobs that you have to turn to turn on the oven and set it to 350 degrees, or does it have a digital display?

BETH

No, it's just knobs.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So when you turn it to bake, you get nothing?

BETH

That is correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have a [clock](#) on this unit? Okay. Has anybody cleaned the stove from the last time it worked? Wiped down the stove or anything? The first thing I would check, on a lot of the older units that have a clock, what happens is if you wipe down the [control panel](#) or whatever you can bump the [knobs](#) on the clock, and normally what happens is you can bump it from what they call the manual position or normal baking, to the timed bake position. So you might want to look at your clock...

BETH

I did look at that and it didn't appear to me that the time mode was a problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have three dials on this, the regular [clock](#) and then the start and stop time?

BETH

I'm not right in front of it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Just make sure that they all correspond, that your start and stop time are at the same time of day.

BETH

I do know that is true, when I looked at it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. If it's not coming from your clock, then I would suspect the [thermostat](#) itself has probably conked out on you. Normally what happens is when you turn it to bake you send current to the bake element as well as the pilot light or these little indicator lights. So when you switch it on and you're not getting that, it's normally inside the [control panel](#) itself, the thermostat control. That is again, if the [clock](#) is in the correct position. The clock as well, at times, depending on how the unit is wired, can cause the same scenario. But if all that is set properly, then I would lean more toward the oven thermostat, or simply on the unit you say it's twenty plus years old, you could just have a broken or burned wire on the thermostat that's achieving the same thing. Over time it

heats up. You may want to get a service guy out on this one if you have to troubleshoot this electrically and find out what's going on.

BETH

Okay, thank you.

2005 Kenmore Dishwasher Not Cleaning Well and Soap Still Left In the Dispenser

JOHN MCCULLOCH

With a question on a [Kenmore dishwasher](#), here's Chris in Grand Blanc on NewsTalk 760 WJR.

CHRIS

Actually another quick question surfaced so if you don't mind. But the Kenmore, you got the [model number](#) there; it doesn't seem to be washing well. It's about two and a half years old. Two things: sometimes the soap—and it's a powdered soap that we use and I don't know if we ever stick to a particular brand—doesn't fully come out of the soap [dispenser](#). It will be sort of smashed, half out, half in still. And then the dishes in general seem to be [greasy and dirty](#), and just don't seem to be like back in the day when we first bought the [dishwasher](#), really clean and neat. So I don't know if that's the soap issue, and we also have all our water running of a well and we have a water softener and all that.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have a filter as well, a household filter?

CHRIS

Yeah, actually I've got one of those reverse osmosis systems.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

CHRIS

So I've got a solid filter. I don't know, maybe it's just my wife!

JOHN SOWDEN

Don't go there; you can get into a lot of trouble! You have the whole house on an RO, or do you have just the drinking water?

CHRIS

I have the drinking water on the reverse, but part of that goes to a specific filter. So the house is on a good filter, yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, wash ability is one of the harder things to diagnose when it comes to washers, [dishwashers](#), and anything that uses water because there are a lot of things that can come into play. The first thing that you need to determine is, is the unit [filling properly](#)? And

that is done by monitoring the dishwasher, start it up, listen for it to fill and it will run for a period of time and drain and fill again, and it does this several times throughout the cycle. After the main wash cycle or the main fill, it will drain first and then fill a couple times. Normally the second or third fill is what they call the main wash. Just open the door after you hear the [water valve](#) shut off, which most often you can hear it shut off, and open the door and see how much water you have in the bottom of the dishwasher.

CHRIS
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

You should have around a half inch of water or so along the whole bottom of the dishwasher. Now the newer units use a lot less water than the older ones, so it might be just a little bit of water in the [sump](#) and the surrounding area, but just make sure you're getting water into it. If it's getting water into it, then I would let it run for several more minutes and then before it drains, open it up and make sure the water is still there, that it's [not draining](#) out of the machine while it's running. You've got a small rubber flapper in the drain area there that's used to seal off the water for the drain and to route it through the strainer to help keep the debris off the dishes. If that little flapper is broken or not sealing, that can cause the whole problem.

CHRIS
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

And as well, we had a call earlier today; simple things that people most often will overlook are the [silverware basket](#). Is there a hole in the bottom where you have a knife sticking through that's just holding up the wash arm? It's unable to turn. Or is the wash arm cracked, or full of debris? The [wash arm](#) needs to have all those holes in it clear because that's what moves it around as the water pushing out against that hole is pushing out directing it to move. So a lot of physical inspection and monitoring might help, with the first thing being, just make sure you're [getting enough water](#) in there. So I'd start there and make some observations.

CHRIS
Absolutely, we'll do that. I appreciate it.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you still have questions or concerns you can go to our website, Repairclinic.com; go to the "[Contact Us](#)" section of it, and we have a lot of general information there. If you can also put in your email address, your [model number](#), answer some questions about your machine and ask specific questions, and we can hopefully give you a good specific answer.

Frigidaire Side by Side Refrigerator/Freezer Water Leaking Into the Bottom of the Refrigerator and Freezing

CHRIS

Can I throw something small at you here?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure.

CHRIS

A [Frigidaire](#), I don't know the [model number](#), it's a [side by side refrigerator/freezer](#). I've got [water leaking](#) out the freezer bottom side, coming out of the fridge actually. I've got a huge buildup of ice.

JOHN SOWDEN

In the bottom of the freezer?

CHRIS

On the freezer side. What do I need to do? Do I need to just thaw that out?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. What's happening there is the defrost drain is iced over or restricted, and you need to thaw out the unit. Then more than likely you'll have to remove the back panel, and underneath the cooling coil which is next to the wall there's going to be a metal trough that water drips off of the coil and collects in this [trough](#) and then drains through a drain [tube](#) to the underside of the refrigerator, and then evaporates into the room. It's possible that it's iced over, and it could be plugged up. You could take a [turkey baster](#) with some hot water, and just flush that tube out, and that might help the situation.

CHRIS

Get all that thawed out, then?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you have to get back to warmer, and make sure you've dried it all out as well.

CHRIS

That's what I figured. I just haven't done it yet. Thank you.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, you've got a lot of weekend projects so far, and the weekend is almost over.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Passing out a lot of work here!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah.

Whirlpool Gas Dryer, Model LG7681 Taking Too Long To Dry

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Skip, in Grosse Pointe with a question on a [Whirlpool gas dryer](#) on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Skip.

SKIP

My Whirlpool [gas dryer](#), it's an LG7681 heavy duty, it all of a sudden after three or four heavy loads ago; it started running a full hour and [not drying](#) the load completely. I opened it up and stuff would be damp to the touch. Not wet but not dry. So I run it a second time and maybe it would run two hours instead of one, and finally it would get dry.

JOHN SOWDEN

Was there any heat in the drum? Did you notice if the clothes were warm at all?

SKIP

I put my hand on top of the dryer cabinet and there was plenty of heat, but I reached over and grab the exhaust pipe and it took a long time for that to get any heat to it. I wonder if that's plugged.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's exactly where I was heading. Normally if its generating heat in the dryer and it's not getting out, then it's a [plugged vent](#) or a plugged blower housing. And at times if you get something caught in the [blower wheel](#) itself, it will break some of the veins off the blower wheel, and even though it's turning, it's not moving enough air. But I would suspect that you have a plugged vent going outside.

SKIP

I have quite a long run...its aluminum pipe, it's not flexible stuff.

JOHN SOWDEN

Good, good. Straight-walled [venting](#) is always the best, especially for long ones. What I would recommend is cleaning that out. The quick test you can do on that is just throw a few wet garments in there, unhook the vent, and for one load—I don't want people running their gas dryers in their homes—

SKIP

Oh, I understand.

JOHN SOWDEN

But, as a test, you can run a load, and if it seems to shut off and the clothes are drying in forty or fifty minutes, then you know that the problem is in your vent. That's where I would start.

SKIP

Thank you very much. I appreciate your help.

Question about Home Winterizing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here with a question on winterizing, Graham in Troy, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Graham.

GRAHAM

Hi. I was asked to help a friend winterize his home, and he's moved out of state, and he wanted to know if I should disconnect the [humidifier](#) via the wires and leave the furnace still running in the home. And the [refrigerator](#) water line, the refrigerator will still be on so it doesn't get musty, but should we disconnect the water line?

JOHN SOWDEN

First of all, you're turning the heat off or you are not in the home?

GRAHAM

No, we wanted to turn the heat down to about fifty-five degrees.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

GRAHAM

But he wants the water shut off to the house. I don't know why, but it's just stuck in his head that he wants the water shut off and then have RV antifreeze put in all the traps and the toilets and everything.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. If you're going to keep it at fifty-five degrees it probably is not going to be an issue—obviously depending on the house—as far as things freezing. But if he's not going to be there and the furnace quits, then it sounds like he's just trying to protect himself and make sure everything is up to par.

GRAHAM

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

And so now you're there trying to winterize, but at least you didn't have to help him move. It sounds like you got the easy part of the job there! As far as disconnecting the water lines, if you disconnect it from the—it depends on what kind of [humidifier](#) you have on the furnace—if it's a [flow-through model](#), you'll probably be okay. If it's a type that holds water in the drain, like a tank or reservoir where a [pad](#) is actually spinning, then you probably want to remove that and drain that as well. For the [icemaker](#), if you disconnect the water from the water line, on one side, where the inlet supply is, you might want to loosen the nuts going either to the dispenser or the icemaker, and drain the other side of that, because it still will hold some water, and could freeze if the furnace

fails and crack that [water valve](#). With the water off, it's not going to be a problem, only until you hook it back up and turn the water on and find you have water gushing out. If you do that, disconnect the icemaker, I'd recommend inside the freezer section, on the icemaker itself depending on what kind it is: you either lift the arm up, which shuts off the icemaker or on a lot of the newer models there's a switch on the front of it, an on/off switch. That way the icemaker is not trying to fill, every thirty or forty minutes. Normally what happens is, if you don't do that you'll hear a buzzing sound every hour or two and that's the icemaker trying to fill with no water connected to it. We run into that once in a while where you get this unusual, intermittent sound from the [refrigerator](#) and it's because the icemaker's disconnected and yet still calling for water.

GRAHAM
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN
It's one of those things that, if you're not turning the heat off, I wouldn't expect a lot of issues, but it would be terrible if you didn't do it and something happened. So I'd say to winterize it, yeah, you can disconnect the water. The other thing you might want to disconnect is the [dishwasher](#), if there is one.

GRAHAM
Never thought of that one.

JOHN SOWDEN
Yes, and your [washing machine](#). You need to disconnect the [hoses](#) and you can use the RV antifreeze in the pump assembly. Again, if that freezes, most of these components are plastic, the [water valves](#), the [pumps](#), and if it freezes it expands and then cracks the housings on all these particular parts they have in the appliances. You might want to get a checklist of anything that uses water in the home and go from there. And first find out if he really wants to go through this because when he comes back, he needs to hook it all up, flush it all out, all that good stuff.

GRAHAM
Right. On the [humidifier](#), how will I know which style humidifier on the furnace it is?

JOHN SOWDEN
The easiest way is to get the model off the unit, and you can go to our [website](#), put the [model number](#) in, and then you can look at the components and see if it has a tray, a [water reservoir](#), or if it's got what looks like a honeycomb type [filter](#). Most of those the water just trickles along the top of the pad or the filter media, and then runs down a drain. It's just an open drain, so those don't really hold any water.

GRAHAM
If it was the honeycomb version, I wouldn't have to disconnect the wires?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

GRAHAM

Okay. Well, great! Thank you very much!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Once again, that website to go to is Repairclinic.com. You'll need the [model number](#), but once you've got that, you're in business.

JOHN SOWDEN

We hope so!

Jenn-Air Side by Side Refrigerator Icemaker Not Dispensing Ice

JOHN MCCULLOCH

A [Jenn-Air side by side](#) is on the mind of Paul in Ann Arbor, on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Paul.

PAUL

Hi, I'm having trouble with my [ice dispenser](#). We're getting ice, but it's [not dispensing](#). The buttons on the front won't let it dispense.

JOHN SOWDEN

When you push your glass into the cradle there to get ice, do you hear anything?

PAUL

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Nothing?

PAUL

No. And the other thing is, the hole where the ice comes out of the tray, it's getting all frosted up and plugged.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, generally that's caused from an air leak, and that's when the flapper that is supposed to close inside the [dispenser assembly](#) is not sealing up. So what happens is, the most air gets into that area and creates a frost buildup. As well as just over time, the ice chips, the small particles that kind of are broken off as it comes through the [chute](#), can cause that situation. So I guess the first thing I would do is take out the [ice bucket](#) and empty it and set it in the sink and let it thaw out overnight. If you have an [ice jam](#) in the front of the ice bucket assembly, then that will be gone, because again that can accumulate a lot of ice chips and cause the thing not to turn. And also, clean out all the ice from the ice chute itself. If you need to use a hairdryer or something to do that, be very careful that you don't melt the plastic. But I would start over with, clean out that [dispenser](#) chute

assembly, and then the ice bucket, put the ice bucket back in and let it make ice for a day or two so you get some fresh, new, hopefully properly sized cubes into the dispenser assembly, and then put it back in operation and see if it goes away. If not then I would look and make sure you are getting good ice cubes out of it, then you have to get into the [dispenser assembly](#) and see if that flapper is broken or the return spring and/or [solenoid](#) has failed and is causing it to stick open.

PAUL

So I would do that by disassembling from the front?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, a lot of those you have to unsnap the cover around it, and then there are screws that you have to take off to slide out the dispenser assembly. But before going through all that I'd take the easy route first, which is make sure that the [ice bucket](#) itself isn't jammed up from ice debris in the front of it. Rather than tear it all apart, you can just empty it out and let it sit, and thaw out over night, and then also the [ice chute](#) itself just wipe out all the ice chips you can see in there. Again if you have to get in there and thaw it out a little better, you can use a hairdryer but just be careful that you don't use too much heat, just take some time, and make sure that flapper is sealing properly.

PAUL

Okay, great! I appreciate it! Thank you very much!

2005 Maytag Stacked Dryer/Washer Stops When It Reaches the Spin Cycle

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We'll go to Port Clinton, Ohio, for a question from Carl on a [Maytag stacked washer/dryer](#), here on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Carl.

CARL

Hi, good morning. I've got a small apartment size [stackable unit](#) that does not flow through its cycle and kick into the spin mode.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. How old is this machine? It looks fairly new.

CARL

It's a '05.

JOHN SOWDEN

A '05. So it's just out of warranty?

CARL

Yeah, it looks that way.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. And you say it [doesn't spin](#). Does it wash and fill and drain? Does it just not go into high speed spin, or it doesn't tumble at all?

CARL

It will get to the point where it should go into the spin to the rinse cycle, and then it just sits there. It will go through its wash mode all right.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it does tumble, you just don't get the high-speed spin?

CARL

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, on this unit here, these are all [electronic controls](#). Normally, if the unit washes and tumbles, then the drive train is okay. Now have you noticed any noise or anything prior to this in spin, like any screeching?

CARL

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. I'm just trying to back up a little bit here. When it tries to go into the spin cycle itself, you get nothing? It doesn't try and then quit?

CARL

It does try. You can hear the [motor](#) spinning, but it doesn't even remotely turn the drum.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, so it turns it as fast as it would in the wash mode, but it just [never kicks in for high-speed?](#)

CARL

No, it doesn't...you can hear the motor running in the background, but it does not move the barrel at all.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, okay.

CARL

And then you might be able to turn it off for an hour, two hours, and come back to it, and it might kick in and work just fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

I would inspect the rear assembly where the rear [pulley and belt](#) is and look for signs of a [water leak](#). It's possible that what's happening is the tub bearing is worn and it's just not

able to get it up to speed; when you try to call for high speed spin, it's loading up the motor, and causing it to drop out on the thermal cut-out. It's also possible that the [motor](#) itself is just tired, and after a short period of time it overheats on its own, without any drag on the drive train. Lastly, it could be in the [control board](#), but I'd lean a little more towards the motor because it's trying to get there. But that's the first thing I'd do is inspect---

CARL

Through the rear of the machine?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and look and see if you see any signs of water dripping or leaking. That's normally a sign that the rear water seal has failed, which then allows a small amount of water to get into the bearings, and after a period of time it can cause drag on that, which for wash isn't that big of a deal because it doesn't tumble that fast, but when you try to ramp it up for high-speed spin which on a machine like this is eight hundred RPMs or more, it just can't do it. So I'd start there. If not then I'd lean towards the motor. On a lot of these units, you almost need the [manual](#) because in order to check the motor and things of that nature you need to make resistance readings of the windings on the motor itself. There's also a tachometer that's on the motor that senses if the motor is turning or not, and that again could be faulty. It's sending a signal back to the [computer board](#) saying it's turning this many RPMs and if it's trying to increase or decrease. But if it's intermittent and after a period of cooling down it does seem to work okay, I would lean towards something in the drive train. Either a drag on it through a worn [bearing](#), or the motor itself.

CARL

All right, I'll start inspecting.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's all you can do.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

A question, John, on the last call. The front-load: Does that have a belt on it like a dryer?

JOHN SOWDEN

Depends on the appliance. A lot of the newer ones have gone to a belt-less model. What you have is they mount the stator basically to the shaft of the motor, the tub itself. So what you have is, instead of having a shaft sticking out the back of the tub and then a [belt](#) driving that, they make that one big motor. So you have a big stator on the back of that that's energized and creates a magnetic field and spins the drum itself. So, most of them, yes, there is a belt that a motor turns the belt and it goes to the larger [pulley](#) to get you up to spin. But a lot of the newer technology they go right to a belt-less machine, where basically you just have a big [motor](#) and it adjusts the voltage to that to speed it up or slow it down, or reverse it.

1990 Philco Dryer/Washer Will Fill in the Rinse Cycle but Not In Wash

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And with a question on a [combo washer/dryer](#), here's Larry in Ferndale on the Appliance Repair Show.

LARRY

I've got a unit, it's on a boat, and it's a combination [washer](#) and [dryer](#). Philco manufactured it and it's been sold manufacturing rights over and over and over again. I've forgotten the brand name that's on it now.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's an Italian made or something now.

LARRY

That's right. It won't fill. It will fill on rinse, but it [won't fill on wash](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. What temperature are you selecting for the wash cycle?

LARRY

That's a good question...

JOHN SOWDEN

See, normally on most machines, for rinse you get cold water. If you select hot water wash and cold water rinse, and the hot water valve side of the [inlet valve](#) has failed, it won't do anything, but when it's time for the cold water, then you will get the water to come in because you're selecting that side of the valve. There's two solenoids on the water inlet valve, and one is hot and one is cold, so if one side has failed—

LARRY

I have the picture. So what I should try is cold-cold and see what happens, and that will let me diagnose the problem.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. Anything that is entailing any warm water, if [water just trickles](#) in then you might be getting just the cold side of it. It could be just that the screens itself on the water valve are restricted, depending on where you're at, the hot water heater and all that good stuff. You can get a lot of sediment and over time it actually just fills up the water valve, the intake part of it, with crud. You can look for physical restriction, or it's something that electrically may have failed, that the hot water side is just not getting there.

CARL

Do we know somebody that does house calls and fixes it, and is familiar with these units?

JOHN SOWDEN

I have personally serviced quite a few of those. Is this an older unit?

CARL
1990 vintage.

JOHN SOWDEN

Like you said, Philco used to be produced by Ford. Ford Philco, and they made a lot of [refrigerators](#) and things of that nature. And then the name was sold off and a lot of the stack units and stuff were, as you pointed out, made and imported in here under the name.

CARL

It's not stacked. It's a combo. It washes and dries.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. As far as who handles that, I would call several service companies and see if they have any guys that have worked on these. There's not a ton of them out there. I can tell you the biggest problem you're probably going to run into is not finding somebody who's willing to come out and take a shot at it, but somebody who's going to be able to find parts for it.

CARL

I can get parts. I've got a handle on the distributor. So I either open the phone book or I kidnap you. Are those my choices?

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends on what kind of day it is at the office. Maybe I'd be open to that [laughing]. But yeah, I would just call around and say here's what I have, do you know anyone around that's well-versed on it. And really, because there's not that many out there, you're just looking for somebody with a lot of experience in the field who can figure it out. But it might be something that you can do yourself by just making some visual observations. Just remove the water [hoses](#), see if the [water valve](#) is plugged. As you said, check it by putting it on cold-cold and see if it works, then put it on hot-hot and see if it doesn't. And as far as the water valve goes, you may be able to get something that's generic that would work and you wouldn't have to go through all the special channels to obtain parts for it.

CARL

Okay. Thank you very much.

General Drip-Through Humidifier Continually Drips Water Whether the Furnace Is Running or Not

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we'll go now for a question on a [drip-through humidifier](#) from Nick in Commerce Township on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Nick, go ahead.

NICK

Hello, gentlemen. I have a [drip-through humidifier](#) on my furnace. And the water [continually drips](#) through, whether the furnace is running or not. Do you think I might be able to fix that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. Do you know what brand you have?

NICK

General.

JOHN SOWDEN

A General. Yeah, and you've got the flow-through, the [honeycomb pad](#) that's in there.

NICK

Exactly.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it doesn't matter where you set the [humidistat](#); the water just continually goes through?

NICK

Yeah, I can turn it off, or I can turn it all the way, or I can turn it to the appropriate setting, and it still drips through.

JOHN SOWDEN

And do you hear the [solenoid valve](#) click on that, when you turn it on and off at the humidistat?

NICK

You know I probably haven't paid close attention to that, but I haven't heard it. Is it loud enough that I would hear it?

JOHN SOWDEN

It's not. Well, it depends on where it's at. Normally, you just hear a really small click as the solenoid is actuated.

NICK

Is the solenoid what the two wires are hooked up to?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, the two wires, it's a little valve with a brass body with a little black [solenoid](#) on top of it.

NICK

Okay. I gotcha.

JOHN SOWDEN

And what happens is when you set it for your [humidistat](#), normally mounted in the furnace ductwork, you set it at thirty or forty percent, whatever you have, and as the humidity drops, it sends, it depends, it could be one hundred and ten volt or a twenty four volt valve. Most are twenty four, and it sends a voltage to the [humidifier solenoid water valve assembly](#), and allows water to drip through. Once you have reached the proper humidity level, it then cuts power to that. Most often, from what you're describing is, the [valve itself is stuck open](#) from debris caught in the water line. Basically crud, rust, things of that nature. The valve is not seating.

NICK

The valve is part of the solenoid?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it's all one piece; it's the little brass body with the solenoid on top. You may be able to remove it, and on some of them they have small screens that you can either clean and/or replace. They normally have a small orifice in there so that the water comes through at a very slow rate, and you don't want to enlarge the hole on that or you really get it flooding. But if it's always on then it sounds like the [solenoid](#) is sticking open. You might be able to soak that in vinegar or something overnight and loosen up whatever is in there and get it to work again. If not, you need to replace the valve. Just make sure that you look at the reading on the valve itself and see if it is a twenty four volt or a one hundred and ten volt valve.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Yes, it makes a big difference.

NICK

It will say right on there, then?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, normally it will say right on there.

NICK

So if it's a one hundred and ten volt I got to find a way to cut the electricity to the—

JOHN SOWDEN

I would recommend you do that regardless of what it is. Just cut the power to the thing before you start undoing wires.

NICK

Would that be the main switch that turns on—

JOHN SOWDEN

It really depends on how they have it wired, and you can wire it in a lot of different ways, as far as does it run with the [blower motor](#), it really depends on whoever installed it and

how they wired it in. You can also check the supply voltage to the valve, again, if you're careful, to see what you have. Normally if it's wired into the furnace, if you just cut the power to your furnace, if the controls to the furnace are on a separate transformer fed off of the incoming line, then normally that will cut power to the whole assembly there.

NICK

Great, I can figure that out. How often should I replace that [honeycomb](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, once a year; twice a year if you have really bad water.

NICK

Okay. Thank you!

2000 Maytag Washer or Dryer Is Leaving Black Marks on Clothes and the Dryer Is Making Loud Noises

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We go now for a question on a [Maytag washer](#) and [dryer](#) to Dennis in Grosse Pointe Woods, on News Talk 760 WJR. Hi Dennis, go ahead please.

DENNIS

Good morning. We have a Maytag washer, a Maytag dryer. The washer is about seven to eight years old and the dryer is three years old. We noticed that the whites are coming out gray, and sometimes there's a [black spot](#), but we're not sure if that's from the [dryer](#). I've taken the cap where you put the fabric softener in the top apart and lifted it, and there was some crud in the bottom there and I cleaned that out. It still seems like it's coming out gray, and occasionally we'll notice some black spots too. But the dryer when it's going around is making a [loud noise](#) like it's off-balance or something, so I don't know if that could be coming from the dryer, the spot. I don't know why it's making it, so I have two problems!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, I was going to say, it sounds like you have two problems, and one machine could be causing the other, or just usage. Do you use a lot of bleach for the whites?

DENNIS

No, just Tide and fabric softener.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. Discoloration like that has a lot to do with detergents and water temperatures and all that good stuff, as far as the gray discoloration. Even the water you have coming into the machine. So that's normally not something that's a part of a problem in the machine itself as just what kind of clothes you're putting in there with what other clothes, what detergent you use, temperatures, things of that nature, and then with the bleach, you can over do it. So I would look at the way the unit's used as far as the gray goes. Now for the

spots, that can be coming from the [washer](#) or the dryer. As you pointed out, the [fabric softener dispenser](#), after a period of time, they can get restricted with residue. The fabric softener does look like grease at times if it comes out on clothes, and normally you can tell the difference by seeing if it washes out pretty easily. If it does then it's probably the fabric softener, but if it doesn't then it's grease. You have a [loud noise](#) in your dryer. It's possible that you've got a worn [roller](#) or something like that that's causing the drum to jump or bang around. And again, that's something that as that roller wears, it could be putting residue into your dryer drum, and that could be where you're getting your black spots.

DENNIS

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

I would inspect all of those things, but as far as the clothes themselves go, if you go online there's a lot of places that have laundry guides as far as how to get out stains and address the gray clothing and things of that nature and I would see if you're doing or not doing certain things that might be causing that.

DENNIS

You don't think that the [agitator](#) itself, at the bottom, the seal in there, could be leaking anything?

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a [top loader Maytag](#)?

DENNIS

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you know if it's a one- or two-[belt](#) model?

DENNIS

That I don't know.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, it is possible that the main seal is failing and you're getting some grease up through the tub seal or the [transmission](#) itself. Normally that's going to be on older machines. You said this is only seven or eight years old, and normally that doesn't happen until the machine is fifteen or twenty years old. Not that it can't happen; normally it starts out small and it gets worse, so if this is still intermittent, you're either still in the early stages of that, or it's coming from somewhere else.

DENNIS

But that wouldn't turn your clothes gray?

JOHN SOWDEN

No, no, nothing like that.

DENNIS

Okay. Well very good, thank you sir!

1997 GE Microwave Bottom Part of the Handle Has Broken

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here's a question on a [GE microwave](#) from Betty in Taylor, on the Appliance Repair Show.

BETTY

I have a little problem with my [microwave](#). It's a General Electric, eleven years old, and yesterday I went to open the door and the bottom part of the [handle](#) detached. That little screw that goes into the oven that goes into the handle just came apart. Now I have it fixed right now with duct tape. I don't want to put too much pressure on the top, so can I fix that, can I do anything about it?

JOHN SOWDEN

You need to replace the handle. Normally what happens is the screw hole either gets stripped out or the tab on the handle is broken. The handles, the white handle for your unit is about sixty bucks...

BETTY

Did you say white handle?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

BETTY

I have a black handle.

JOHN SOWDEN

I must not be looking at your [model number](#) correctly here. Well, the black handle is cheaper, how about that: it's only \$51.75 according to my website.

BETTY

Oh, that's not much better.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. At any rate, you have to get at the back side of those screws. In order to do that you have to take a small putty knife, and if you open the door you'll see that there's an inner panel and along the perimeter there's a series of tabs that you need to depress and kind of pry out the [inner door liner](#) and then you can get at the back side of those screws, and then put it in. It's not a bad idea to have the unit leak-checked when you're done. If

you call somebody out and have him or her do this, normally it's not that big of a job. If you want somebody to do this for you, it shouldn't be a whole lot more than just a service call. But parts and labor included, you're probably looking at about a hundred dollar adventure. You can try epoxy and things of that nature, but what happens is—

BETTY

That's what I was going to ask you, yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you glue that [handle](#) to the outer door and it keeps breaking off, then if you decide to repair it correctly, now you need a new [door](#), which is about one hundred and fifty to two hundred bucks. So you're better to get it done now if you're going to do it. And you can nurse it along for a little while and kind of pull in the top of it and put your hands along the bottom and kind of help the door open for temporary use.

BETTY

Right, right. Okay, I thank you very much.

Speed Queen Commercial Washer Not Draining All the Wash Water before Filling Up with the Rinse Water

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And with a question on a [washer](#), here's Gladys in Sterling Heights, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Gladys.

GLADYS

Hello. I'd like to ask you, I live in an apartment building in Sterling Heights, and we have six washers in our apartment building. When the wash water drains to empty, which should drain completely, it empties about eight inches from the top of the [agitator](#), then starts filling with clean rinse water. And then we don't have a full tub of clean rinse water. It gives a couple squirts when it spins.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you use a permanent press cycle?

GLADYS

No. I use the regular cycle. I wash on hot. That's it. And it automatically rinses in cold water.

JOHN SOWDEN

So the unit stops, and is it [draining and filling at the same time](#)? Does it ever fill back up and start to wash again?

GLADYS

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it just sits there forever, and drains and fills at the same time?

GLADYS

Well, it drains, and then it stops about eight inches from the top of the [agitator](#). Then starts filling with clean water, and that's supposed to be your rinse water!

JOHN SOWDEN

And how often does it do this?

GLADYS

All the time. Every [washer](#) I've used in here has done it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Does it fill back up and continue to wash properly after that?

GLADYS

Well, it will fill up with half dirty, half clean water, then it agitates, and then it rinses all completely out. Then when it spins you get a couple squirts of clean water, and that's it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. The reason I ask about the permanent press is that, on some units they have a kind of a half-rinse, and that's normal, where it will drain half the water out, and then fill it back up; it's a second rinse. But normally you still will have a full rinse where it drains all the water out.

GLADYS

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

So if it's not doing that...and you say all the machines do this?

GLADYS

Yeah. There are six washers, and all the washers do it.

JOHN SOWDEN

And is it all one room, do they all drain into the same spot?

GLADYS

Right. I think each one has its own drain hole behind the washer. They're [Speed Queen](#) models; they've got a star in the front that says Energy Star. I've asked management and I've asked the repair guy from Coin Match.

JOHN SOWDEN

And what did they say?

GLADYS

They told me that the federal government has an agreement with management with our building for conserving energy. And I said but you're rinsing their clothes in dirty water!

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So they're telling you that this machine was set up to do this?

GLADYS

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. So they're telling you that that's how they have it programmed for your particular situation?

GLADYS

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if that's the case, then there's not much that you're going to be able to do. I was thinking that possibly that you might have a [plugged drain](#) or something somewhere that wasn't allowing the unit to drain all the water out in the time it normally takes. But if all these machines are uniformly doing the same thing, then I would say that you should take it up again with the management. Do these have [circuit boards](#) on them?

GLADYS

I'm not too sure.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have a [dial](#) you turn, or do you just push a button?

GLADYS

Oh, yes, you push a button.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So basically they have programmed the machines to accommodate this, and I'm assuming these are commercial units. So yeah, it could be something that they have to meet the guidelines for water and things are just set up that way. I don't know if there's another way to cheat it, other than to let it go through the...well, you say you never do get a full complete rinse of it?

GLADYS

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it fills for the first wash. The only thing you could do is run it again, if you wanted to rinse your clothes, and then stop it after the first wash, and then take your clothes out after it's done spinning but before it fills up again.

GLADYS

Yeah, and you can't take it after the completely full wash, and of course it's a dollar and a quarter every time you do this. So it isn't like this is free. And we have a clubhouse across the street, and it has the older type washers that are still the [Speed Queens](#), where you have to put the money in. The ones over in our apartment building you use that money card.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right, right.

GLADYS

And I watched them over there, and it empties completely out, all the dirty water.

JOHN SOWDEN

But these are older units?

GLADYS

Well, a little bit older, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, in this particular case I don't think there's anything you can do about it. If they've got the machines programmed to meet energy standards, obviously they feel that it's not making that much of a difference as far as the rinsing goes. I'd say take it up with the powers that be there and see if there's something that they can do. Or if they can give people the option or something of that nature.

GLADYS

Yeah. Well I know what I will do. When it goes into the final spin, empties everything out, I got about seven or eight minutes before it spins. And I'll take seven or eight buckets of water and dunk it up and down.

JOHN SOWDEN

There's ways to beat the system.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

It looks like you've got it figured out, anyway.

GLADYS

And I've noticed the difference. When I didn't do that, you know like your sheets and bedding, it doesn't seem very sanitary!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Well, I don't know what to say except go talk to the powers that be. And Gladys, I'm going to put you on hold, will you stay on the line for a second?

GLADYS

Yes.

Maytag Washing Machine Coins Accumulating Between the Inner and Outer Drum

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We're going to go to John, in Imlay City, with a question on a [Maytag washer](#) on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi, John.

JOHN

I have a stackable Maytag [washer](#), and there's coins accumulating behind the tumbler. They seem to be in those rib things. I don't know what you call them.

JOHN SOWDEN

You've got coins accumulating between the inner and outer drums?

JOHN

Correct. And you know the ribbed plastic things that are in the inside?

JOHN SOWDEN

The paddles.

JOHN

Yeah. They protrude out?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. In the tub itself.

JOHN

Right. One of them in particular is accumulating coins. There are twenty to thirty coins in there, and I have no idea how to get behind there and get them out. And I've called repair people and nobody can give me the answer.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, what I need to start with to look at is a breakdown of your particular unit, i.e. the [model number](#) off of it to give you a specific idea of how to get at that particular one. Some of those paddles have the screws that are on the inside. Meaning if you open up the door and grab a flashlight you'll see where there are a couple of stainless steel screws that mount that paddle to the inner drum. If that's the case, then you can get at it from internally on the [washing machine](#). Other ones, the screw goes through the backside, which means you need to tear out the drum and separate the shelf, the back and front of the outer tub and go at it that way. Which is a much bigger job. So it really depends on what you have there.

JOHN

There are no screws in the front, so it has to be the rear thing.

JOHN SOWDEN

You don't see any screws around on the paddle itself?

JOHN

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, then that's generally not going to be any fun for you. And I'd address the problem because what's going to happen is those coins are going to get into your [pump assembly](#), and either cause it not to drain or wipe out your pump. They can also get caught between the inner and outer drum, and as the unit spins, it will actually score and eventually wear and cut a hole in the plastic outer tank. So nails and things of that nature, any metal objects, as it spins they can get caught in there and ruin the whole thing. So you might want to spend the effort or the money and get it addressed now. And of course, moving forward, make sure you empty your pockets before you throw the stuff in the washer, because it's an expensive piggy bank you've got there right now.

JOHN

Yeah, I can open a small bank account with what's in there, but I'll look into the repair person and see if we can't get it fixed.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, great!

Whirlpool Portable Dishwasher Fills With Water and Doesn't Drain

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here with a question on a [Whirlpool portable](#), here's Angie in Ypsilanti on the Appliance Repair Show.

ANGIE

I have a portable [dishwasher](#) that [won't drain](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. You've got dirty water standing in there?

ANGIE

Well, we've kind of emptied it out by hand.

JOHN SOWDEN

When you say it won't drain, does it wash and not drain, or it just fills with water and doesn't do anything?

ANGIE

It fills with water. I'm not sure if it doesn't do anything or not. We went to check on it one day, and it was just filled with water.

JOHN SOWDEN

Was it clean or dirty water?

ANGIE

It looked clean.

JOHN SOWDEN

Was it hooked up to the sink when you determined this?

ANGIE

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So, you can have a few different scenarios here. If you had it hooked up to the sink and it was full of water, it could be that the unit is not draining properly, which would mean either something is [caught in the drain hose](#) or something in the [pump](#) has failed. Or, it could mean that the [water inlet valve](#), the part that your hose that goes from your sink to your dishwasher is hooked up to, the water inlet valve, is leaking, and you're getting a small amount of water. A lot of times they will fill up the machine overnight if the water valve is not seating properly, which is why I asked if it was clean or dirty water. So normally if it's clean water, the [water valve](#) is the problem. It's allowing water to come in when it shouldn't. If it's dirty water, then the unit's not draining properly and you have all of that debris still stuck in there. So, I'd start by seeing what you've got going on that way. I'd hook it up to the sink and fire it up and see if it fills properly, and if it washes, and if it washes okay and then [doesn't drain](#) again it could be something in your [pump assembly](#) that's not allowing it to drain out.

ANGIE

Okay. Now it's an older one. Would it be worth fixing? Is that something that would be expensive?

JOHN SOWDEN

If it's a water valve, normally they're thirty to fifty dollars; it's a pretty straightforward repair. I'd say, yeah, I would repair it, because portables are normally seventy five to one hundred dollars more than a normal [dishwasher](#). You don't have to pay for installation like you would a normal dishwasher, but because you're paying for the side panels and if you need a portable, and it's not that old, you might want to look at repairing it at least one time. If it needs a [pump](#) and [motor assembly](#), then I would price shop, but even then you still might find it economical to do this.

ANGIE

Okay. Because it was somebody else's, my sister in law gave it to me; it was free, so is it worth it?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, yeah, I mean if it was free then the price is pretty good even if you put a few bucks into it and get it working. The first thing is just trying to figure out what it is. If you hook it up to the sink, turn the water on and start it up, see if it fills and drains. If it does, then I would look at the [water inlet valve](#). And then what you do is just let it run through the cycle, and if you leave it hooked up to the sink, check it a few hours later. Another thing you can do is while it's filling—you normally can hear the unit fill—open the door. If it continues to fill, then the water valve is sticking open, because you know it's not an electrical problem at that point because you've cut all power to the machine by opening the door.

ANGIE

Okay. All right, thank you.

2007 Dacor Double Wall Oven Accumulating Moisture on the Top Of the Lower Oven Door

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And with a question on a [wall oven](#), Dave in Ann Arbor, on the Appliance Repair Show.

MARY

Hi, this is actually Mary, Dave's wife. He's pumping gas.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay!

MARY

So here's the question. We have a brand new [Dacor double wall oven](#), it's brand new, and it was installed in October. And at Thanksgiving we had a twenty five pound turkey in the upper oven, and a couple hours into cooking dinner, I went to put stuff in the lower oven, and as I opened the door of the lower oven there were big puddles of what I assumed to be condensation that had puddled on the top of the door of the lower oven. And I wiped them off and put stuff in the lower oven and an hour later when I went to check the stuff in the lower oven it had happened again. Don't know what to make of that, as it's a brand new oven.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, it could be normal operation. A lot of times, as the oven bakes, it does cook out the moisture in the food, and that has to go somewhere. If you have something with a lot of moisture content, it's possible that you can get some dripping at times depending on the unit, between the doors or on the [inner oven door glass](#). It can also be due to installation. If there's not enough room around the cavity to allow the unit to breathe properly. Or, it could be something that needs attention or could be a service flash out on this to change

the [door seal](#) or adjust the door or put a new vent in to accommodate baking situations where you have a lot of humidity inside the oven and it's not getting rid of it properly. Being that the unit's three months old, I would simply call for service.

MARY

Okay. All right. Well, it's interesting, because there was another problem with the door. There was a little ding on it, so we had the service people come out to fix the door and the guy from the service place said he really didn't know what to make of that problem. So we were just considering calling [Dacor](#) directly, because it was not an inexpensive unit and we need to know if that's, like you said, normal operating or if something needs to be done.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. That's certainly not a cheap oven. It could be a lot of them will have, depending on the unit and how it's wired, they'll turn on a [blower motor](#) when the unit's in operation to circulate the air, and so it's possible that the blower motor has failed. So I would call Dacor and see if they have any suggestions. If not, then I would still, you have a warranty, you've paid for it, I'd have somebody come out and take a look at it and see if they can determine if there's something that's not happening that's supposed to, or if it's just the nature of the beast. Do you have this problem with any other types of baking as far as the cakes or things of that nature?

MARY

No, it was Christmas time and I made cookies using both ovens and I made a prime rib. But again, the prime rib didn't cook as long as the turkey did; the turkey was the one thing that cooked for a long time and it was a big piece of meat. It was twenty five pounds.

JOHN SOWDEN

It sounds like we need to come to her house for the holidays! Like I said, any observations you can make as far as when you use this cycle or that temperature or this recipe or I cooked this product, helps the service people as well as the manufacturer help determine what's going on there. And they might just say that with things with lots of moisture content in them, it just going to do this. Or as I said, it could be something where after the unit's been out in the field for a while, that they find, well, this is something we can put a different [door gasket](#) on or add a [fan motor](#) to move a little more air around there to cure it. But you definitely need to go through the proper channels. I wouldn't do anything myself if the unit's under warranty.

MARY

Great. Well thank you so much!