

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—April 27, 2008

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Gaggenau Cook Top Burner Caps Need to Be Replaced But Can't Access Model and Serial Numbers

JOHN SOWDEN

We're going to go to William in Detroit, who has a question on a [Gaggenau stove](#). You're on the air, William.

WILLIAM

I have this [Gaggenau](#) built into the countertop, and I have the burner heads, you know what I'm referring to, don't you? They're like little black discs that fit on top of the burner?

JOHN SOWDEN

The [burner caps](#)?

WILLIAM

Caps, right. Well, the ones in the front are two inches and the back ones are three inches. I'd just like to know if I could get those replaced. They're discolored and I'd just like to replace them fresh, to give it a fresh look.

JOHN SOWDEN

You certainly can. If you log into our website, which is...

WILLIAM

I don't have a computer.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. Well, you can call this number: 1-888-34-Fixit. Our phone center hours are eight o'clock to midnight, seven days a week. You'll need the model and serial number as they read off of the appliance itself, not the brochure.

WILLIAM

I can't, it's built in. That was my problem. I tried calling this service the other day, and there's no way I can get at any...

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a [cook top](#)?

WILLIAM

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Unfortunately, at times they put the [model and serial number tag](#) on the side of the burner box, which obviously if it's in your counter...

WILLIAM

I can't get at it!

JOHN SOWDEN

So, yeah, in order to get the right burner caps, it's really imperative to have that information, to make sure we give you the right cap so you have proper ignition and all that good stuff.

WILLIAM

Well, it looks like I'm out of luck.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, not necessarily. You can always go to a library or a friend's house that has Internet access, and you can then go to our website and look at the burner caps that we have for the various brands, including [Gaggenau](#). The one that I have that would be closest to your model, which is a [VG223](#), shows that we have both the caps in stock the large one looks like it's about forty three bucks and the small one is twenty six.

WILLIAM

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

But you do want to make sure that you have the [model and serial number](#) to make sure we get you the right parts, because even sometimes with the model number, they will have breaks in the production where before serial number one million you'll take this

burner cap and then after one million you'll take this one. So, when they have a production break they have specific nomenclature in the part breakdowns to let you know which parts to use.

WILLIAM

I got you. Listen, thank you very much.

Whirlpool Dryer or Maytag Washer Leaving Black Marks on Clothing

JOHN SOWDEN

We're going now to Julie in Ann Arbor who has a [Whirlpool dryer](#) question.

JULIE

I am getting [black marks](#) on my clothing when it comes out of the dryer.

JOHN SOWDEN

When it comes out of the [dryer](#)?

JULIE

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Have you inspected the clothes as they come out of the [washing machine](#)?

JULIE

No, I guess not.

JOHN SOWDEN

I would start by looking at the clothes before you put them in the [dryer](#), because a lot of times, because the dryer is the last appliance the clothes go through, if you have any stains on your clothes, people assume it's the dryer. But you could have a situation where your [transmission](#) is leaking in your washer, or you have some other condition where it's putting spots on your clothes. When you take them out of the dryer, that's when you notice them.

JULIE

Sure.

JOHN SOWDEN

So I would start there. The first thing you can do to inspect your [dryer](#) is just open the door, grab a flashlight and look around the inside of the drum and see if you see any black specs or anything of that nature.

JULIE

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

At times, if the wearing components, like a [roller](#) or something is starting to fail, you can get some metal shavings and things like that that can work their way into the dryer drum, and then of course get onto your clothing. So I would start with a visual inspection of the dryer and see if it's apparent where it's coming from. Then, if you don't see anything, I would start digging through the laundry as it comes out of the washing machine and making sure it's not the washer that's the culprit here.

JULIE

If it is the [washer](#), what are my options here?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if it is the washer, it depends on A, what kind of washer you have...

JULIE

[Maytag](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Ok. And if it's something that's coming from inside the drum, normally if you're having spots on your clothes it's either from the fabric softener buildup or a [transmission](#) leak.

JULIE

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you can look and see if you have a softener buildup around the [agitator](#) or in the top of the tub. If you don't see anything apparent, you might want to pull the agitator up; if you notice any black spots under there, it's probably coming up through the agitator seal.

JULIE

And is that a major repair?

JOHN SOWDEN

Unfortunately, yes it is.

JULIE

All right! Thank you very much.

1998 Whirlpool Top Loading Washing Machine That Doesn't Drain

JOHN SOWDEN

And now we're going to go to Jennifer in Rochester Hills who has a question on a [Whirlpool washer](#). Good morning Jennifer, what's your question?

JENNIFER

My [washing machine](#), you set your load and the water level, the clothes start to agitate, and then it pauses a while before it empties, and then rinses. After it agitates for the amount of time, [it doesn't empty](#). It just stops. You can't hear the timer ticking, and then if you bang on the back of the top of the machine, it starts again, and then it follows through the whole cycle, and everything works fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you have to kind of be like Fonzi and tap on the machine to get it to work, is that correct?

JENIFER

Right, yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, normally that's a sign that you either have an intermittent [timer](#) control or possibly just a loose connection in the control panel.

JENNIFER

Well, my husband took the back off and we looked at everything and it all looks like it's connected properly. And sometimes it doesn't do it. But most often, every time it does it now, it doesn't matter what cycle you put it on, whether it's permanent press or super wash or anything.

JOHN SOWDEN

Next time it does that, try opening and closing the lid, too, because the [lid switch](#) that's sticking or not making contact all the way can also cause it to not go into a spin cycle.

JENNIFER

Well, I've done that, and if you bang the lid down, it will start again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, either one, either jarring the lid switch to make a connection or something internally in the timer. The only way to know for sure is when you catch it doing that, check the lid switch; you normally have to use an [ohmmeter](#) to do that. Or again you can troubleshoot it by using the wiring diagram and seeing internally in the contacts in the timer, where you may have lost that circuit. I would lean toward one of those two components. The lid switch is probably even more common than a timer failing, because obviously it gets used more, since every time you open or close the lid it's actuated. But I would start by inspecting all the electrical connections; make sure they're tight, because that can cause it too. If not, then next time it does it if you can check the lid switch. It involves tearing the machine apart, which we do have instructions on our website for how to access your particular unit. Or, you can take the approach of replacing both components, or start with the [lid switch](#) or the [timer](#), whichever you think is more likely the culprit. If you tap on the timer dial, then if it takes off I'd say it's probably in the timer.

JENNIFER

In the timer, yeah. It's a ten year old machine, so it's probably not worth replacing those parts.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, at ten years old, it depends on how many miles it has on it and how many people are in your family. But I can tell you that a lot of the new machines have a lot of the same components that your machine does. Meaning if you go buy a new [Whirlpool direct drive unit](#), a lot of the components are similar to what you have, so you're not really buying a better mousetrap per se. So if you haven't got a lot of use out of the machine and you have to put a hundred bucks into it, it's not uncommon to have to, after a decade, put a few dollars into it.

JENNIFER

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's always up to you.

JENNIFER

We'll try that. Thank you.

1988 Sub Zero Refrigerator Model 550 with Ice Buildup on the Back Wall

JOHN SOWDEN

Now we're going to talk to Eve in Harrison Township, who has a [Sub Zero refrigerator](#) question. Good morning, Eve, what question do you have for us?

EVE

I have a twenty year old Sub Zero refrigerator, and it is [collecting ice on the interior back of the refrigerator](#), right above where the fruit is stored.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. Have you had any [cooling problems](#)? Have you been [freezing things in the refrigerator](#)?

EVE

No, it seems to be working fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. But you're getting an ice buildup?

EVE

Exactly.

JOHN SOWDEN

In the [refrigerator](#) section?

EVE

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

Most often, that is caused by an air leak in the cabinet, meaning that you've got a [door seal](#) that's not sealing. Or possibly where the tubing goes through the cabinet, the seal there has been compromised, which is just a Play-Doh type substance that they put in there. And what's happening is it's not defrosting all the ice off the coils. More than likely, you say it's a 300 series, so it's between twenty and thirty years old...

EVE

Actually, it's a [550 series](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, OK. It says Sub Zero 300 here on my screen. So it's a 550. Have you had any work done on this machine?

EVE

Yes we did. A couple of years ago, I think it was the [compressor](#) that was replaced.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. An ice buildup is normally a sign of either an air leak or an incomplete frost pattern meaning that you're running out of refrigerant in that portion of the refrigerator, on the refrigerator side. That is normally caused by a small leak in the cooling coil in the refrigerator section; to put in more technical terms, you probably have a hole in your evaporator, which is the cooling coil. I would recommend that you have somebody come out and look at this.

EVE

Sounds like it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes. And, unfortunately, this is probably going to be an expensive repair, too. Anytime you have to get into the sealed system these days, especially if they have to reclaim all of the refrigerant, it takes a lot of specialty tools to perform a sealed system repair. So I'd say to have somebody come out and perform this, if it has a leak, which is what I would bet on, you're looking at between five and seven hundred dollars before the day is done.

EVE

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news. Hopefully I'm wrong, but from what you're describing...

EVE

Where would I find an expert on the sub?

JOHN SOWDEN

I would look on the manufacturer's website. Sometimes they will have a local page.

EVE

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

There's also a company that's in Auburn Hills that's called Authorized Factory Service. They're also a [Sub Zero](#) dealer in that area and I know they do a good job there.

EVE

OK. Thank you.

Maytag Plus Freezer on Top Refrigerator with Water Leaking From the Freezer and Out the Bottom of the Unit

JOHN SOWDEN

Lauren in Livonia has a [Maytag refrigerator](#) question. Good morning, Lauren.

LAUREN

I have a [Maytag Plus](#) and we get [water leaking out from the bottom center](#) all the time. I'm just wondering if this is anything we can fix ourselves.

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a freezer on top?

LAUREN

Yes, it is.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you're getting a [leak inside the interior](#) of the refrigerator section?

LAUREN

Yes, and then it comes out the bottom of the entire unit.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. But it's starting from the ceiling and then leaking out the bottom and on to the floor?

LAUREN

Yes it is.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's normally a sign of a frozen defrost drain. When the unit goes into defrost, it has to send the water somewhere. It takes all the frost and ice off the coils with a heater and then normally it's supposed to be routed through a drain trough and then a drain tube, and then drain into the pan underside of your machine. If your drain tube has frozen over or has debris in it, if you've had any spills in the freezer section, then the water backs up and it starts raining in your refrigerator section.

LAUREN

OK. Anything I can do?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you do have to disassemble the unit quite a bit in order to get at the drain. You can try just unplugging the unit and see if by doing so the ice will melt and then the drain will free up. By unplugging it I mean leave it that way for a couple days with the doors open. If that doesn't work, then I would have somebody come out and look at this, unless you're comfortable with tearing this apart.

LAUREN

OK. Well, thank you very much.

Hotpoint Side by Side Refrigerator/Freezer with Ice Buildup inside Freezer Preventing Refrigerator from Cooling

JOHN SOWDEN

Ted in Sandusky, Ohio has a [side by side freezer](#). Ted, good morning. What's your question?

TED

I found out what model it is. It's a [Hotpoint](#), and I've got a side by side freezer and refrigerator. The freezer starts getting ice buildup on the inside, and so on the refrigerator side it [stopped cooling](#). And when I just turn it off and defrost it, it starts cooling all over again for about two or three weeks; then I have to go through that same cycle all over again.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it sounds like you have a bad [defrost component](#) in the defrost cycle. It's not self-defrosting.

TED

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

More than likely it's the [defrost heaters](#), but it also could be the [defrost timer](#) or the [defrost thermostat](#). You do have to remove the back wall of the freezer section in order to gain access to the defrost heaters, but they are probably the more common failing part on

a self defrosting system. They are kind of like a light bulb; you can check them with a meter and they're either good or bad. If they're what they call a glass tube heater, you'll be able to see the break in the wire. Normally there are two of them mounted on the back wall: one halfway up on the coil, and then the other one towards the bottom.

TED

OK. Is that expensive?

JOHN SOWDEN

Most [defrost heater kits](#) run between forty and seventy dollars.

TED

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can replace the heater and the [defrost thermostat](#) and the [timer](#) for probably around a hundred bucks, maybe a little bit more, and replace the whole defrost system.

TED

OK. Thank you very much.

Two Electric Dryers with Separate Vents and Circuits Both Not Heating Well

JOHN SOWDEN

Next we're going to talk to Ronald in Bellevue, Ohio. He's got some [dryer](#) questions.

RONALD

Hi. I have two dryers that sit side by side. Both electric and they don't dry the clothes at the same speed that they used to.

JOHN SOWDEN

Are they sharing the same vent?

RONALD

No. They have two identical vents. I got an amp probe, and I measured the amp draw on the dryers. They both agree with the name plate information.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK.

RONALD

I do have one extra turn in the exhaust hose on each of them. My wife says that we do not have enough heat in the dryers. And she thinks that's the reason they aren't drying properly.

JOHN SOWDEN

Are these the same type of [dryer](#)? Same model?

RONALD

No, two different ones.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. And you're having the same problem with two different makes of dryer?

RONALD

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Did you by any chance make sure that you're getting the proper voltage to it?

RONALD

Yes I have.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. If they're sharing the same circuit...

RONALD

No, they have two separate switches.

JOHN SOWDEN

How long is the venting on these units?

RONALD

They're in the basement and they exhaust at head height.

JOHN SOWDEN

Have you taken it apart and inspected the venting?

RONALD

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it's all clean?

RONALD

Yes. I also took the dryers apart and checked the fan area.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right.

RONALD

And they're both clean.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have one washing machine that's feeding the clothes to these [dryers](#), or do you have two [washers](#) as well?

RONALD

Sometimes we have two, but right now we have one.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. The one thing I would start with, make sure that the washer is spinning the clothes out properly. That you're not getting the clothes as spun out as they used to be. My point is you might actually have a problem with the [washing machine](#) if it's [not spinning](#) the clothes out. Therefore it doesn't matter which dryer you put them into, they're going to have [longer dry times](#), because the dryer is now taking on the additional load of damper clothes in there. If that is not the case, then I would try, just for kicks, to just disconnect the vent to one of the units and see if that makes a difference.

RONALD

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

If not then I would get into each unit and see when it's cycling on and off as far as the heat times go. Normally if you set it at regular setting high heat, the air inside the drum as the drum turns will get up to about 150 to 160 degrees and then it will cycle off, which is something you can monitor using your amp probe. And then once the temperature gets down to around 130 to 135 degrees or so, the [elements](#) will cycle back on. The elements are not on all the time that the unit is in operation. They cycle on and off to pulse the heat inside the drum.

RONALD

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

It could be that one of the [thermostats](#) is sticking. But again I find it unusual that you have two dryers, which are different animals and different brands, but are having the same problem. So I would say there's something common to each one of them that might be causing this, which is normally the vent or the washing machine that's feeding them the clothes

RONALD

OK. Thank you very much.

JOHN SOWDEN

So I'd start with a thermometer, put it in the venting and watch and see what kind of temperatures you're getting.

Asko Dryer Not Heating Even after Vent is Cleared

JOHN SOWDEN

Victor in Farmington Hills has a question on an [Asko dryer](#). Good morning, Victor.

VICTOR

John, I have an Asko dryer. First of all, when it went dead, we knew there was a [high limit switch](#) at the back. But we took the vent out and took a leaf blower and blew it through, made sure the vents were clean. And it worked well for one month and after that now again, after about every five days or so, the last time it stopped the body was very, very hot.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. Well it sounds like you've got an issue...how long is the vent on this dryer?

VICTOR

It's about six feet.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. And you have cleaned it all out?

VICTOR

Oh, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

And what about the unit itself? Have you cleaned out the blower housing?

VICTOR

No, I have not. I took out the kick plate from the front, and I did see the [blower wheel](#) in the front. But it must be in the backside.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, on this particular unit, I do believe the easiest way is to lay it on its face and remove the back panel in order to gain access to all the components inside there. And it sounds like if the vent was plugged, a lot of times the lint has nowhere to go, so it backs up into the blower housing.

VICTOR

Oh, I got you.

JOHN SOWDEN

So even though you've solved half of the problem, you still might have to get in there and dismantle the unit; get your vacuum cleaner and a [brush](#) out and clean out all the lint that might be in the blower itself.

VICTOR

I got you. Thank you so much and God bless you.

Kenmore Top Loading Washing Machine Intermittently Not Draining or Spinning with Faint Burning Smell

JOHN SOWDEN

Bob in Toledo has a [Kenmore washer](#) that smells funny. Good morning!

BOB

I was running a wash cycle and it smelled faintly like rubber burning. But it was still running, and the more I looked at it, and I had a flashlight looking down behind it, it smelled like electrical heat of some sort.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. Is this washer loaded from the top or the front?

BOB

It's a top loader.

JOHN SOWDEN

A top loader? And does it spin the clothes out, or do you just hear the motor running?

BOB

It's been an intermittent problem. We hear a motor running, and sometimes [it won't drain](#) the water or [it won't spin](#) out and we have to manually advance the dial to make it spin and drain. But this time, last night it just, I heard the motor try, I heard the hum, but there was nothing happening, not even to drain the water or spin or anything.

JOHN SOWDEN

So all you hear when it goes to the spin cycle is a hum and then a short time later it kicks out and you get nothing?

BOB

Yeah. Well, the other thing is, the top where the controls are, it felt warm. So I decided to unplug it. I didn't know if there was something wacky with the control board up there or not.

JOHN SOWDEN

It could be in the control board. From what you're describing, it sounds like the motor is trying to start, so normally the control board would be doing its job of sending the signal down to start the motor for spin. I would start with looking at the motor circuit. It could be just that the [motor](#) itself is tired. It could also be that something is caught in the [pump](#) or something is rattling around in the pump. This is a [direct drive unit](#), the pump mounts on side of the washer's motor, and then the drive train or [transmission](#) is connected through a [coupling](#) on the other side. So something getting caught in the pump will physically stop the motor from turning. They also have, on a lot of these units, a [start](#)

[capacitor](#), where if that is open or shorted, can cause it to draw high current and not start the motor itself.

BOB
OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

As far as the heat in the control panel, normally even if it's something like the board is failing you're not going to get a warm sensation in that area. Were you using hot water wash or something like that?

BOB
Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. Well, that might be just the whole cabinet itself is warm because you're using hot water. Normally with electrical problems you'll smell it, but it won't get hot. Unless there's a fire or the, [motor](#) it gets really hot over a long period of time, but you're not going to get that kind of heat coming from the control panel. My bet right now is that you have a bad motor for that. And if this is a [direct drive unit](#) as they call it, you can go to our website, repairclinic.com, and we have instructions on how to access the cabinet on this and get into the components.

BOB
OK. Well great, thank you very much.

2008 Whirlpool Sport Duet Front Loading Washing Machine on Pedestal is Walking During Spin Cycle

JOHN SOWDEN

We're still taking your calls here at the WJR Appliance Repair Show. Now we're going to go to Fran in Livonia. Good morning, Fran. You have a washer that's walking?

FRAN

Yes! We bought a new washer, one of the front loaders. It's a Whirlpool, one of the [Sport Duets](#), I believe.

JOHN SOWDEN

The Sport, yes.

FRAN

We've leveled it. It's sitting on our basement floor, so it's sitting on a concrete floor. And we've leveled it, side to side, front to back; the thing is perfectly level. And yet when it goes through the spin cycles, it's walking, it's moving. I don't know what to do to stop it from doing that.

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a unit that's on a pedestal?

FRAN

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK. Well, it could be a problem with the pedestal. If the legs are not locked down, or if it's for some reason damaged, or in construction if you've got a crack or some of the screws that keep it together are loose, it could be actually in the pedestal itself that's causing the situation. If that is not the case, and while this is not an easy way to tell, but if you were to take the [washer](#) off and put it on the floor, and it seemed to work properly, then I would lean more towards the pedestal being the problem.

FRAN

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

If that doesn't solve it either way, they do make some sound absorbing or vibration absorbing pads. They're called [Shake Away](#)TM pads, and they're four rubber blocks that you can mount the washing machine on and basically keep it from taking on extra vibration, and at times that will help as well.

FRAN

So where do you get those?

JOHN SOWDEN

[Repairclinic.com](#). 1-888-34-Fixit is the number.

Whirlpool Top Loading Washing Machine That Doesn't Spin

JOHN SOWDEN

Let's talk to Pete in Commerce, who's got a question about his [Whirlpool washer](#). Good morning, Pete.

PETE

Good morning. Yeah, I have a Whirlpool top loading washer. It goes through the cycle and it drains the water, but then when it comes to the spin cycle [it doesn't spin](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

OK.

PETE

And I have to go through maybe a couple times on the spin and it will kick in. But now it's not doing even that. It's just [draining the water without spinning](#). I've got the machine all apart and I'm trying to figure out what's wrong with it.

JOHN SOWDEN
Does it agitate?

PETE
Yeah. It does the whole thing.

JOHN SOWDEN
There's a [coupling](#) between the [motor](#) and the [transmission](#), that if it's broken it will fill with water and drain the water but it won't agitate or spin. Now you say it doesn't spin the water out?

PETE
Yeah, right. It just drains the water, but it just doesn't spin. I used to get it where I'd turn the knob and then pull up on it and it would catch it. Now it doesn't do that anymore.

JOHN SOWDEN
So what happens is it drains the water out, and then the water stops?

PETER
Yeah, it just finishes the spin cycle and then it goes through the cycle again. It fills the water up and it will just wash again, but the spin cycle doesn't do that.

JOHN SOWDEN
But in the past you were able to mess around with the control, and you could get it to spin the clothes out?

PETE
Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN
So it's telling me that hopefully, mechanically it's able to spin.

PETE
Right.

JOHN SOWDEN
So I would lean more towards the control, the [timer assembly](#).

PETE
Oh, really?

JOHN SOWDEN
Well, what happens on this unit is it will spin and then it will stop, and when it stops, they have what they call a neutral drain where it will drain the water out. Then when it stops, everything stops. Internally on the transmission, you have some components that then

lock into place for spin, and then the unit will go ahead and start up again with the [transmission](#) engaged for spin, and it will spin the clothes out. So if it's going to that spot and stopping and not continuing on and if you were able by messing with the control to periodically get it to go ahead and spin the water out, it sounds like mechanically it's doing what it's supposed to be doing. It sounds like the timer itself, when it goes to that hard stop to set it for spin, it's not continuing on. So from what you're describing, I'd lean more towards the timer control.

PETE

So it's not the transmission or anything like that, then?

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally, if it's spinning and it engages and you can get it to do it, it's normally OK. You could have an intermittent problem in the transmission, but normally you'll hear the [motor](#) try to start and it will lock up or something like that.

PETE

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it sounds like to me it's in the electronics of the unit.

PETE

All right, well I thank you very much.

Kenmore Washing Machine Question on How to Keep Socks from Flipping Over the Tub and Getting Stuck in the Pump

Ken in Warren has got a [Kenmore washer](#) problem. It's pulling the socks into the pump.

KEN

Good morning. I have a Kenmore; I call it a permanent model washer and dryer combination. And I had a repairman out, oh maybe two weeks ago, and he pulled a sock out of the pump.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you have small children in the home?

KEN

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

No? OK.

KEN

And then about a week ago my wife told me that it had stopped. So I went downstairs and it had the same, almost an electrical burning smell. I took it apart, pulled the sock out, put everything back together, and its working fine. Is there a mesh or something that could have deteriorated over the years?

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a top loading [washing machine](#)?

KEN

Yes it is.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you were able, by watching the first time when the repairman came out, to go ahead and tackle the second repair yourself?

KEN

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, that's a good thing. That's part of what you pay for when you call a service man out. I always tell people to at least watch and see what they're doing, but don't offer to hold the flashlight, because that just gets in our way. At any rate, from what you're telling me, there are a few things that could have occurred. The first is there were actually two socks that got into the outer tub. What happens is, normally as it's washing a small garment (that's why I ask if you have small children, because the smaller it is the easier it is for this to occur) the garment will flip over the top of the inner tub and get lodged between the inner and outer tub. Then over time will work itself down into the drain hole and then of course into the [pump](#).

KEN

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

If the person that came out previously did not look between the tubs, you could have had the other sock already there; by using it for a week or so, it could have worked its way through, and then you found the second one. The other condition is, and normally when this occurs is when you use the highest water level you can for the machine, and then you use a large load. You put a lot of small garments in and you use the extra high water setting is normally when this condition is going to occur. As far as anything deteriorating or causing this to happen, I wouldn't think so. There's really nothing in there that would cause it to do this. Now it's possible that the unit's [not agitating](#) properly. You could have a problem with the agitator not cycling back and forth properly and it's causing the water to whirl and is accelerating this condition, so when it's agitating I'd just check in there and make sure it's going back and forth. If not you can rebuild the inner portion of that transmission for twenty bucks. They have a set of [dog ears](#) is what they call them, or

small gears within the transmission. But otherwise, this is not something that occurs very often, where you get two in a week.

KEN

No, this is the only time it's ever occurred.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. So I'd say as a preventative, when you wash small articles, use the medium setting. Or don't mix a lot of small garments, you know, throw your socks in with your jeans. Obviously everybody uses their machines differently, but normally this occurs because of the combination of high water level and small garments—sometimes one will flip over the top and work its way down, and sometimes it can be between the inner and outer tub for quite some time before it finally finds its way into the pump. But the good news is there wasn't a major repair bill, no components replaced or anything like that. And, you also know how to get into the machine and fix it yourself next time, so hopefully there's been something learned from all this.

KEN

Thank you, sir. Have a good one.

1998 Kenmore Washing Machine Not Draining All the Water Out During Spin

JOHN SOWDEN

OK, now Frank in Westland has another question about a [washer not draining](#). Go ahead, Frank.

FRANK

I've got, I thought it was a [Whirlpool](#), but it's a Kenmore. It's about ten or so years old. It's a direct drive, so there aren't any belts. It washes fine, but [it won't drain](#) off all the water. It leaves about a quarter of the water in it. If I keep rotating the dial to the spin cycle, eventually it will get rid of all the water on the top, but you can still hear water underneath when that thing finally engages into a high speed spin cycle. It won't do that when the water's in there.

JOHN SOWDEN

OK, we have to make this quick, Frank. I would say the first thing to check is the [pump](#) itself, make sure there's not a sock caught in it, like what happened to our last caller, which can happen and reduces the water flow.

FRANK

OK.

JOHN SOWDEN

Or if you had a coin or something flip into the pump it can burn off some of the impellers in there.

FRANK

It's making some noise, too.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'd say you should start with the pump assembly on that, and you can go to our website, repairclinic.com, and get all the instructions on how to properly access that unit.

FRANK

All right. Thank you, sir.