

## Appliance Repair Show Transcript—July 27, 2008

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### 2002 Amana Oven Door Never Closes Tightly

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We start out with a question on an Amana oven door from Thomas, in Livonia, here on the Appliance Repair Show.

THOMAS

Good morning! I have an [Amana oven](#) that was installed during a kitchen remodel about six years ago. The oven door does not close tightly and actually never really has but we didn't really think it was a problem. Now sometimes the [light](#) won't even stay off. It's getting looser. Is there anything I can do, a retro part or anything I can buy for it to firm up the door?

JOHN SOWDEN

Have you ever self-cleaned the oven?

THOMAS

Yes. We don't do it often, but we have done it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Normally, especially on a newer unit, the [door gaskets](#) themselves are pretty spongy when they're new, and if you lock the door closed and clean it that will help them conform to the door frame. Now you say you moved the appliances around. At times, that's where some trouble can start. If the springs, the [hinges](#) are slightly bent, or at times the actual inner door panel will have a slight bend to it so that even though the hinges are closing back up firmly against the door frame, by having the inner door panel warped a

little bit you're going to get that gap at the top of the door. So, I would start by just looking at the door panel and see, and sometimes it's hard to see. If it's flat, then check the [door hinges](#) and see if they seem worn, or if one side isn't snapping closed. One thing you can do, depending on how the hinges are mounted, you can go and shim the door hinge by putting a few washers on the top part of the hinge, which will make the whole thing tilt back another four or five degrees and that will help close the door as well.

THOMAS

It seems like it closes up on the bottom of the door before the top of the door.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, that could be an adjustment thing. I would try, if nothing else, just to see if it helps any, is to go ahead and run it through a self clean again and see if that [door gasket](#) compresses a little bit. Sometimes you have to end up putting new hinges on and a new inner door panel to get it to close tight. Sometimes, as I said, you can shim the door. It takes a lot of goofing around with it, and on a lot of these units you have to remove the side panels of the range to get in there. The most inexpensive thing is to try to shim it a little bit or just get a new set of [door hinges](#) and see if that helps.

THOMAS

Do the [springs](#) ever fatigue with age?

JOHN SOWDEN

Over a period of time, yeah. If it's only five or six years old, obviously depending on use, normally what I find in a situation like this is something has probably fallen on the door or children or grandchildren have used it as a step ladder to get up on the counter and it actually bends the door panel a little bit. Obviously, they're not going to tell you about it!

THOMAS

Well, we don't have any of them running around here!

JOHN SOWDEN

Or even moving it. You said you moved it during the remodeling...

THOMAS

No, this was a new unit that was installed during a remodel.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, okay, so this has always been a problem but the problem is getting worse...normally if you use self clean a few times it will get better as far as the door closing.

THOMAS

I hadn't thought about that. Okay, we'll give it a try!

**GE Oven Touchpad Has Collapsed Inward**

JOHN

[Recording cut off]... [touchpad](#) on my [GE oven](#) that controls all the oven functions. On the right hand side is the up and down arrow for the [temperature control](#) and the hi/low on the broiler.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

JOHN

And that over the up and down arrows, that has collapsed in, it's broken through. Is that an easy fix, as far as if an individual can do that? Or does it require a repairman?

JOHN SOWDEN

It depends. If you get the [model number](#) off the unit and go to our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), you'll see if the [touchpad](#) comes as a separate component; sometimes they come as the [control board](#) or circuit board and the touchpad as all one assembly. Either way, most often it's a matter of three or four [screws](#) around the [control panel](#), of course after you unplug the unit. And then normally there are four to eight wires on the board in the sensor plug-in to change it. If there are any wiring changes it will come with instructions with the oven. Most of the time, it's pretty straightforward on the control boards, they have the terminals on most units marked, BK for bake and BR for broil and then your incoming line and neutral. It's pretty straightforward. The biggest question is how is it made available? Some of them come separately as a [touchpad](#), and that's normally less expensive than the whole assembly. But just as a guess, I'd say that most [circuit boards](#) run between one hundred and two hundred dollars, depending on your model. It's not an uncommon thing to have it fail after a period of time. Right after the warranty expires!

JOHN

This has been a period of time. Is it hard to access the [screws](#) you're talking about? Do I just lift the [range top](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Really, each unit is different. Most of these are set in the [control panel](#). You have to take apart the control panel. The [screws](#) might be hidden behind the [knob](#), so you may have to pull the knobs out and you'll see some screws hidden behind the face of the knob. Others you can go right through the back and you can slide the unit out, there's a small access panel in the back where the [board](#) will screw in from the back of it and there are four or five screws around the perimeter of that panel. Again, once you take it off you'll see everything sitting right there.

JOHN

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Some actually come as a kit, where you get a new [control panel](#) and all that stuff; it really depends on the model and vintage of the unit.

JOHN

All right. I will check the [model number](#) and call [RepairClinic](#).

### **Maytag Refrigerator Freezer on Bottom with Water Leaking Behind Freezer**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's a question on a [Maytag refrigerator](#) that's [leaking water in the freezer](#), from Dennis, in Westland, on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Dennis, go ahead.

DENNIS

It's the [bottom freezer](#), when you pull the drawer out, all the way in the back you can look and see a strip that runs from side to side, it has like these ribs or fence in it, or something, I'm not sure. On the right hand side there's a small discharge of water. It kind of dribbles down and after a couple of weeks you have an inch thick slab of ice on the bottom of the freezer and it obstructs the door opening and closing. I can't figure out what's causing it.

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a [bottom mount freezer](#)? The freezer is on the bottom?

DENNIS

Yes it is.

JOHN SOWDEN

Most often what happens is the [defrost drain](#) is restricted and basically every six to eight hours the unit will shut off for twenty to thirty minutes and turn on a [heater](#) which will melt all the frost and turn it to water. It's supposed to drain into a trough behind that panel you're describing and then it will go through another [tube](#) and into a [pan](#) underneath your unit and evaporate into the room, so you never really see or hear this happening unless you open the door and catch it in defrost once and a while. More than likely that [tube](#) is restricted. At times, it gets frozen over and it can be from debris in there, pieces of corn and peas and stuff I've dug out of there. Other times part of the insulation, over time, can fall down into the drain. They use a lot of what they call Perma-gum; it's silly putty like substance that they use to seal off the cabinet holes, and pieces of that can get caught in there. So what I recommend doing is turn the unit off. The door is all one [basket](#) that comes out on this one?

DENNIS

Yes, there's like an upper and lower, the door pulls out and that is the [lower basket](#), and there's a top one as well.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, you pull that out and you're going to have to remove that back panel; there's normally a series of [screws](#) around that. You may have to remove the side rails for the basket as well; there are normally screws that retain that to the side wall, and then you can remove that panel and get at that drain area. If it's iced over, you might want to take a hair dryer, if you don't want to turn the machine off and let it thaw out for twenty-four to forty-eight hours, you can take a hair dryer and gently in that area remove the ice. No sharp objects and make sure you do not melt the plastic liner with the hair dryer. Then take a [turkey baster](#) (part # 19950151) with some hot tap water and flush through that hole until you get the water to drain properly.

DENNIS

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally, if there's something stuck in that portion of it, it will clear out. On some units you might have to pull the whole unit out, remove the back panel, and in the back of the unit there's going to be another small catch where the water drains into, and that could be plugged up as well.

DENNIS

Okay. I'll take a look! Thank you much.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And that repair that you just discussed with him, is that one that a normal person, and when I say normal I'm referring to myself, which I shouldn't do because the word doesn't apply, but the point is, can somebody who doesn't have a lot of do-it-yourself skills do something like that?

JOHN SOWDEN

That is an entry level do-it-yourselfer type job. It just involves a little bit of your time and patience and effort, along with basic tools—a [screwdriver or a nut driver](#) (part # 32477-12)—to get in there and flush that out. It's a fairly common problem.

### **1988 Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Intermittently Not Filling for Second Wash Cycle**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And here's George, in Flushing, with a [dishwasher](#) question, on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, George, go ahead please.

GEORGE

Yes, I have a [Kitchen Aid dishwasher](#). The water will come in on the first wash, and then it will rinse but when it goes to the second wash, sometimes the water won't come in.

JOHN SOWDEN

So this is a twenty year old Kitchen Aid?

GEORGE

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

And it fills fine the first cycle, and then after that it conks out and you get no water?

GEORGE

Yes, it conks out. Sometimes it will, sometimes it won't. It was doing okay for three days, and then the fourth day it didn't work.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well, most often that's caused by the [water inlet valve](#).

GEORGE

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

What happens is, the first cycle the valves are energized and everything fills as it's supposed to but as they get old, those solenoids sometimes will heat up and actually break. All a [solenoid](#) is is a wrapping with some very fine wire. So the thing will heat up and the circuit will open up, so when it's time to fill again you're trying to supply current to an open circuit, or a failed solenoid.

GEORGE

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

When you let it sit for a period of time, the actual wire wraps will make connection again, only if it's a small break and it swells a little bit. That's why you sometimes get one or two fills out of it. The other thing that can cause this is there's a [float](#) that's in the machine, normally it's in the front corner. It's possible that float has to be sitting on the switch in order for it to fill properly.

GEORGE

Yeah. I've already checked that part out and that is working okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you get the "click, click" when you lift up on the little tab there on the switch?

GEORGE

I don't hear any "click, click" but it's sitting down on the switch. I moved the switch back and forth.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can also check that with an [ohmmeter](#) (part # DM10T) but normally you'll hear a small click; it's a microswitch turning on and off. The only other thing is, at times, if you

get a lot of soap residue underneath that [float](#), it will fill the first time, raise up the float and then it will stick and won't come back down for the second fill. You can observe that when it's running; basically, if the float is lying on the switch lever properly but it's still not filling, then I would replace the [water inlet valve](#). You can go to our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), put the [model number](#) in—

GEORGE

I've been there looking at prices. A couple of people told me I should do that but I didn't want to put in all the money into a twenty year old unit because I thought it might be the selector.

JOHN SOWDEN

It could be in the [timer](#) but from what you're describing, most often the problem lies in the [water valve](#). Again, a timer could have an intermittent spot on it but from your complaint; I've changed hundreds of valves for this same complaint. They'll work fine for two or three or four times; sometimes they'll get to the rinse cycle before they conk out. Obviously, the way to check that for sure is you need to see if you're getting power to it during that cycle. I normally don't recommend that unless you're comfortable working with live electricity, but I would say go ahead and replace the [water valve](#).

GEORGE

Okay, then. Well, thank you sir.

### **1995 Maytag Top Loading Washing Machine Vibrating During Spin Cycle**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Jordan, in Mentor, Ohio, with a [Maytag washer](#) question on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning, Jordan.

JORDAN

Good morning. I have a [Maytag washer](#) and we're in a new home and the floor here is level. We had the same problem at the other house, where it wasn't level. When it goes into the rinse cycle and spins, and it's a light load, the washer starts vibrating.

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this a [front loader](#) or a [top loader](#)?

JORDAN

A top loader.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, it's a top loader. Do you have any idea about the age of the unit?

JORDAN

It's between twelve and fifteen years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. It could be one of a couple of different machines but it's probably just a regular old [Maytag](#). Now you say you have this on a first floor laundry?

JORDAN

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. That may or may not be the issue because they do need a firm floor to not walk during spin. My first advice is to make sure that the [legs](#) are up inside the cabinet as far as they possibly will go, and then tighten down the [lock nuts](#).

JORDAN

Which way do the lock nuts go, up or down?

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally, you turn the [lock nut](#) counterclockwise to tighten it up against the metal frame in the bottom of the unit. What I'd do is just tilt the unit back and take the [leveling legs](#) and screw them up inside the cabinet as far as they'll go while still reaching the floor. Then you'll need two [wrenches](#) (part # D506-6) to hold the leg and tighten up the lock nut to hold it in place. This will lower the center of gravity of the whole machine and it might help the situation. Now if it's doing this with a light load, one of the things about the Maytag's is that actually, they work worse on a light load. If you put just a few garments in there, all the stuff goes to one side of the tub.

JORDAN

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So it could kind of be the nature of the beast, where it will more than likely go off balance more because these machines are meant to take a big load, but a lot of complaints I get like this involve a small load of baby clothes or something where it starts to go into spin and pushes everything off to one side and it will start to shake quite a bit. If it's not doing it with full loads, then I'd say it could be something that you may or may not be able to address and get it to stop doing on the smaller loads.

JORDAN

Okay, I got it.

JOHN SOWDEN

But start by leveling it, get the [legs](#) up inside the machine, and that's what you should do for pretty much any washer. Normally what happens is people want it to be perfectly level, which is good, but it really just needs to be firm to the floor. So what happens is they start moving the legs and all of a sudden, this side's a little off so they drop the leg down a little bit more, and now this side's off, so by the time you get done you've lowered the legs an inch or two. You've got it [level](#) (part # 930-9), but you've raised the

center of gravity of the machine up an inch and it makes a big difference when it's sitting as low as it can.

JORDAN

Okay, I'll try that. Thank you.

### **2005 Maytag Dishwasher Intermittently Not Washing Dishes in Right Rear Corner**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We'll go now to Bill, in Flushing, with a [Maytag dishwasher](#), here on the Appliance Repair show. Go ahead please, Bill.

BILL

Good morning. We have a Maytag dishwasher that's about three years old. When my wife put the mixing bowl in the right rear corner, sometimes it won't clean it at all, and other times it will.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So you have one spot of the [dishwasher](#) that's not getting any water?

BILL

Well, yeah. I guess that's a good way to put it.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. Well, the first thing I would do is inspect the [wash arms](#). The wash arms have holes in them to not only have the water spray up through and onto the dishes, but most of them are cut at an angle, so that when the water is pushed through them they're actually helping to move the wash arm. If you have something caught in one of those holes, the unit will spray the water up, but it will not spin the wash arm. So, I'd make sure that it's turning freely, and that the holes are free of any debris.

BILL

But why would it just be the right rear corner?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if the [wash arm](#) sticks in one spot or is not turning, it's going to spray the water straight up and it might not be turning in that area. With the problem being intermittent, as you described, I would start with, again, looking at the wash arms, making sure they're turning freely, as well as inspect the [silverware basket](#) and make sure you don't have any holes in it.

BILL

Ah, okay. Now I've got to diverge here for just one second. The [silverware basket](#), for some reason, has got holes in the bottom of it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and you know what happens? You throw a knife or a fork or a spoon in there and it falls through that hole and it stops the [wash arm](#).

BILL

Okay because now I've got some pictures of your [baskets](#) here and I was going to call tomorrow and order a brand new basket.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's a great idea! Type WJR into the promo code at checkout and you'll get fifteen percent off your order tomorrow. When you go to checkout there will be a box that says, "Enter Promotional Code Here", type in WJR and you'll be all set.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Unless you call, in which case you can just tell the operator.

BILL

Okay, well I was planning on calling.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

You can do that today! They're open today!

BILL

Okay, great! Maybe it is the basket!

JOHN SOWDEN

If you've got some holes in your [silverware basket](#), all it takes is one utensil to poke through and it just stops the [wash arm](#) from turning! That would kind of go hand-in-hand with it being intermittent because sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't, and that's a fairly common thing if you've got a hole in the basket that will stop the wash arm.

BILL

Are there people in today that we can order from?

JOHN SOWDEN

Until midnight! And the number you can call is 1-888-343-4948 we have people there 8am until midnight.

BILL

Very good, I'll do that then. Thank you very much.

### **Kenmore Side by Side Refrigerator Replaced Ice Dispenser Circuit Board and it Still Does Not Work**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Charles, in New York, has a [GE freezer](#) question, here on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Charles.

CHARLES

Hello gentlemen. I have a [Kenmore side by side refrigerator](#), made by GE. I was having a problem with the time delay module, only in that the stem on the bottom had broken off, so it was difficult to make a selection between the water and ice, etc. So I got the part, I replaced the module, and now it doesn't work. So I took the new module out, put the old one back in, and it still doesn't work! Now I don't know what I've done wrong here. Do you have any suggestions?

JOHN SOWDEN

That's the [circuit board](#) behind the dispenser face there?

CHARLES

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

The time delay, yeah. Have you seen any burn spots on the old and/or new [board](#)?

CHARLES

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Most often what can happen is that when you select the cubed and crushed ice you're actually energizing a [solenoid](#) back in the dispenser compartment that lifts up the arm on the bucket, that little metal arm that sticks out in the back of the [bucket](#). If that solenoid is shorted or has burned out, a lot of times it will take out that [circuit board](#). So, I would start there and see if that solenoid is shorted out. Otherwise, it could be a pinched wire or something of that nature. Anytime you remove something, put it back in. I would say it's unlikely that you got a bad board, especially now that when you put the old one back in it doesn't work. That tells me something probably happened...

CHARLES

That's what puzzled me the most, is that neither [board](#) works at this point.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. It could be something that during installation, a wire pulled off the door harness itself; sometimes you get broken wires inside the door assembly. Also on the top of the [hinge](#), there's a connection where the door wiring harness is made, you might want to check that as well. You almost have to go from wire to wire, make sure the wiring is good, because with openings and closings of the doors there's a potential to get a broken wire but I would start with the [solenoid](#).

CHARLES

Should there be 120 volts going into that [time delay module](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

CHARLES

All right, because I thought about testing that too to see if there's current there. I'll take a look at some of that.

### **1998 Kenmore Freezer Bottom Basket Keeps Falling Off the Rails**

CHARLES

Do you have time for one more question, a quick one?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure! What have you got?

CHARLES

I've got a [Kenmore freezer](#), it's a 21 cubic foot made by [Amana](#), and the weirdest thing is happening with that. The [basket](#), all the way down at the bottom, will not stay on the runners. It's like the runners are spreading further apart.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

CHARLES

Any idea what causes that?

JOHN SOWDEN

This is a plastic liner?

CHARLES

No, it's a metal liner.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's a metal liner! And the rollers for the [basket](#) are the gap has actually gotten wider?

CHARLES

The [brackets](#) are screwed on to the side wall and the [basket](#) travels along those, and there's a greater distance from one wall to the other, to the point where the basket doesn't stay on the track anymore.

JOHN SOWDEN

It just falls down? Is this an older unit?

CHARLES

It's probably ten years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

A lot of times it's more prevalent in a plastic liner because they're foam filled, as yours probably is as well, and that can cause it to shift and warp a little bit over time. At times, with any kind of settling you can get that. There may be a kit for that and what it would generally entail would be shimming the rails or the rollers inward; it's basically just a couple of little plastic plates that you'd put behind that.

CHARLES

Just get some washers?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, and you could do the same thing, fabricating it yourself. So if you get all that information, you can email us at [RepairClinic.com](http://RepairClinic.com). We can try to research that for you and see if there are any service flashes like, we found that this may happen and here's the parts kit to fix it or if not, you can do it the old fashioned way and use some washers or plastic spacers and just bring those out a little bit from the cabinet on each side and then make up that gap.

CHARLES

Okay. Sounds like a solution. Thank you very, very much! I'm glad that you guys are on the internet!

### **Maytag Bottom Mount Refrigerator No Cold Air Circulating from Freezer to Refrigerator**

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we will talk now to Frank, in Linden, about a [Maytag refrigerator](#), here on the Appliance Repair Show.

FRANK

Yeah, I've got a stainless steel [Maytag fridge](#) with the [freezer on the bottom](#) and the two side by side doors on top. The freezer works fine, the ice cubes and everything, but [there's no cold air coming into the fridge at all now](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this one of those Ice<sup>2</sup>0 things? Does it have water and ice in the refrigerator section?

FRANK

Yeah there's a side button, there's ice cubes too in the freezer.

JOHN SOWDEN

You don't have ice and water in the door?

FRANK

I've got it inside the fridge, a little button on the side there.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay and your freezer temperatures are okay and your refrigerators temperatures are they warm or kind of cold, or nothing? What are you getting for the variance?

FRANK

It's not really hot or nothing, but you can feel it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, what they have is there's a [fan](#) that pushes air from the freezer up to the refrigerator. It's possible that freezer or [evaporator fan](#) has failed or is turning slow; the bearings could be worn. Normally, there's also a [damper assembly](#) that's in the refrigerator section and it's basically a gateway of air. It's normally operated either thermostatically or through a circuit board [thermistor](#) or sensor. What that does is, it opens and closes to allow the proper amount of cold air into the refrigerator section; if it's stuck closed then you're going to starve the refrigerator section. So, normally, it's in the control area; you'll see a little door, maybe an inch and a half by three inches wide, and you'll see a little flapper on it. If you see that it's stuck closed, just to make sure that's kind of what's causing it, you can stick something in there to jam it halfway open, or split the airflow. Sometimes a small piece of cardboard or something like that works just fine. If things start to pick up, then you know that's not operating properly. If you go to our website, [RepairClinic.com](http://RepairClinic.com), and get the [model](#) and serial number off of the unit, put that into our search box, and you can see a picture of what that [damper assembly](#) looks like so you know what to look for.

FRANK

Yes, I think I'll do that. That little inch by three inch box, it's inside the fridge?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, the air chute comes out near the back and/or top of the unit where your controls are, and it's the traffic light for the airflow. It opens and closes to let the cold air in.

FRANK

Okay, great! You have a great show, I listen to you every week but this is the first time I've called in. Thank you!