

Appliance Repair Show Transcript—September 14, 2008

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GE Dishwasher Not Draining Properly

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We'll start things out with Jim, in Tecumseh, with a [Whirlpool](#) question here on News Talk 760 WJR. Go ahead, Jim.

JIM

Good morning. I have a Whirlpool [dishwasher](#) and all of [the water does not drain out of the bottom](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Are you sure it's a Whirlpool?

JIM

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Because the model you provided looks similar to a [General Electric](#).

JIM

Oh, I'm sorry! It may be a General Electric.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, it's a GSD. At any rate, by the [model](#) provided, the most common thing you're going to find if [it's not draining](#) all the water out, is if you slide out the [lower rack](#), is

there a small grate about three inches wide that runs almost across the whole back of the dishwasher?

JIM

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, it's a [GE dishwasher](#) then and basically what you want to do is, remove that grate and there are normally one or two screws that retain that, and right in the center there there's a piston and nut assembly. It's a small [check valve](#) that just screws into an opening and normally what happens is, that does not seat and if it doesn't seat properly then the [unit doesn't drain properly](#). So, when it goes to drain it will start to push water in that direction, and then it will seat and push it out through the drain. If it does not it will cause you to have some leftover water, or drain intermittently throughout the cycle.

JIM

Yeah, I took that cover off yesterday and there was a white plastic grille type of thing that I pulled out of there. I didn't feel anything underneath it, but you say I have to take that unit out?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, if you remove that cover, right about in the center of the [dishwasher](#), you'll see it's basically a small plastic cap, about an inch and a half around. That threads into that housing, and that's where the check valve is. If you go to our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), and you put the [model number](#) as it reads off of the unit itself, you'll see a picture of all the common parts for your unit. The [piston and nut assembly](#) comes up as the third or fourth part. It's a pretty common failing part and if it's draining intermittently, then that's probably what it is.

JIM

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

And the good thing is, it's cheap too! It's only about fifteen bucks for the part.

JIM

Okay. Thank you!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And Jim you can get it shipped right to your door, so you don't have to go out after it, which is kind of nice.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah.

Whirlpool Refrigerator Water Filter Cylinder is Stuck in Housing Behind Kick Plate

JOHN MCCULLOCH

We'll go now to Frank, in Grosse Pointe, with a [Whirlpool refrigerator](#) question here on the Appliance Repair Show.

FRANK

My question is, I have a Whirlpool and I've got the [model number](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, and what's your question this morning?

FRANK

We have the [water filter](#), I had changed it once but now after I bought the new one, I keep pushing the button but I can't get the old one to eject. It won't move!

JOHN SOWDEN

And how long has it been since you changed the filter?

FRANK

I would imagine eight months at the worst. The red light just came on.

JOHN SOWDEN

Oh, all right and it's not releasing the [filter](#)?

FRANK

That's right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well, at this point there are several different filters that they use in there. Is this a push and turn long cylinder? What kind of filter do you have?

FRANK

Probably have a push and turn long cylinder. I bought the one that they recommend?

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this one inside the unit or in the [kick plate](#) on the lower left hand corner?

FRANK

It's in the lower left hand corner.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay and you tried turning it and you can't get it to come out?

FRANK

Yes, I can't get it to budge.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's not good. There's no magic secret that I'm aware of for that. You're going to have to just, first of all, look at the other [filter](#) and make sure that you're turning it and pushing it the correct way. You may want to try to grab the top of that with some vice grips or something and try to ease that out of there. If something has broken off on the filter and into the housing, at times, you have to replace that housing and the filter all together, which is not much fun. It's not hard as much as it's just a pain, because it's got water in there so you have to cut the [water line](#) and all of that good stuff.

FRANK

I'm not good at that!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah. So, I would start with the replacement filter. Look at it and make sure that you're turning it the right way. You might want to grab the very top of that with a pair of [pliers](#) (part # D203-5) and gently try to wiggle it out of there.

FRANK

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's about all I can suggest. Other than that, if something has broken off in there, you might have to just cut the receptacle assembly and the filter out of there and start over. Not a very common problem because most of the time there's a lot of activity there, changing the [filter](#). Most of the new ones do come with a little bit of lubrication on the o-rings to help seat the new filter. That's probably what's happening, is it just needs a little help getting it out. So I'd try a pair of pliers and see if that helps.

FRANK

Okay. Thank you very much.

1993 Whirlpool Gas Dryer Drum Isn't Turning but Still Heats

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And we will continue taking your questions with Al, in Southfield, here on the Appliance Repair Show. Good morning Al, go ahead please.

AL

Hello. I have a [Whirlpool Ultimate Care Heavy Duty Super Capacity dryer](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Wow, that's a mouthful!

AL

Yeah, well I guess that's the name of it.

JOHN SOWDEN

It's pretty fancy, then?

AL

Oh. Well, anyway, it's at least fifteen years old, somewhere in there. My daughter is eleven and I know we had it before she was born. The problem is my wife was running it last week and it was running fine and everything. She put one load in, the drum turned, everything worked fine. Then she took it out, that hamper of clothes, put the next one in, and then she hit the button again and now [the drum doesn't turn](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Does the unit make any noise whatsoever when you hit the start button?

AL

Right. It doesn't make any noise whatsoever. Other than, you know that the gas is coming on. The gas works.

JOHN SOWDEN

The gas works?

AL

Yeah, it's a [gas dryer](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. So basically, does the [motor](#) start and run, too?

AL

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So the gas should not turn on at all if the motor is not turning.

AL

Oh!

JOHN SOWDEN

That's what concerns me, because they wire the [gas valve](#) through the [motor start switch](#), so the motor has to be turning up to speed before it will allow the unit to turn on the gas valve.

AL

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So the unit, from what you're describing, if the gas is turning on but the [motor](#) is not turning, which isn't good, it's possible that the [motor start switch](#) has failed in the closed position, which would allow it to not start, and then also would complete the path to the [gas valve](#) itself.

AL
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN
So, are you sure that you're getting flame and everything else, but the motor is not running?

AL
I'm pretty positive I'm getting flame, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN
Okay. That's not a good scenario.

AL
I'm getting heat.

JOHN SOWDEN
Okay. Yeah, that's not good. As I said, it's supposed to be wired so that the [motor start switch](#) itself is one of the components that the circuit goes through to turn the unit on and off. So, I would start there. First I would, just to make sure, turn it on and see what you have. If the [gas valve](#) is firing, then what's happened is something in the motor start circuit is closed or sticking in the closed position, which would then prevent the [motor](#) from turning on. It doesn't happen very often that way though, for obvious reasons. You don't want a situation where you can get a flame without the airflow pulling that flame through the proper channel, the force cone, and into the drum.

AL
Agreed.

JOHN SOWDEN
I would check that first. If that's not the case—

AL
Where do I have to go to check that? The only thing I've done is remove the two [screws](#) on top and lifted up the top, or tilted it back.

JOHN SOWDEN
Okay.

AL
I haven't touched everything else. I just wanted to ask first.

JOHN SOWDEN

The [front panel](#) is what comes off. Do you have a lower panel? Is it a two-panel front on it? Or is it all one piece?

AL

Well, the door opens in the front, but it looks like one piece that will come out.

JOHN SOWDEN

You've already got the top folded back like a car hood?

AL

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well, if you're looking at it, after you unplug the unit, you'll see two five-sixteenths [screws](#) going into the front panel, about two or three inches down on the side.

AL

Yes. That is correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

You take those off and you can pull the unit forward a little it and unhook the wiring harness and simply lift up and the front has got two little catches on the bottom that it hooks on to. You can remove the whole [front panel](#), and from there you can gain access to just about everything.

AL

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you might want to pay attention to how the [belt](#) is looped around the [motor pulley](#) and the tension pulley when you take that off, if you want to pull the drum off. If you for some reason forget it or write it down incorrectly, we have a [belt diagram chart](#) on our website, [RepairClinic.com](#) that will help you through that.

AL

How do I first of all identify the [start switch](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

The start switch is part of the [motor](#) itself. If that were the case, I'd replace the motor because normally the difference between the start switch and the motor is only between twenty and forty dollars and you're better off just starting with a new motor if that is in fact the problem here.

AL

Okay. With the front off, and dropping the hood back down, can I start the unit?

JOHN SOWDEN

You can but basically, in order to do that, you're going to have to have the [door switch](#) closed and you're probably going to want to pull the drum and the [belt](#) out because otherwise, the drum has nothing to ride on in the front of the unit if you're getting in there. So, I would exercise extreme caution because you're going to have a live unit running without being put together.

AL

All I wanted to do is just for a second to see whether...I don't hear the [motor](#), but maybe it is turning and I just don't hear it anymore.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, that's something that other units have a small plug in the front panel, where you can pop that plug out and have a look in there. It's like a key hole.

AL

Not that I'm aware of.

JOHN SOWDEN

You might want to look at the base of the front panel to see if there's a little half inch plastic plug. If there is, you just pop that off and then you can look in there and see if the [igniter](#) (part # 279311) is glowing. If you have any other questions as far as disassembly or anything of that nature, you can go to our website, RepairClinic.com, and you can get instructions of what we just described as far as how to disassemble that, as well as other things to check for in the heating cycle.

AL

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sounds like you have something to do today.

AL

Yes. Thank you.

1998 Amana Refrigerator Ice Maker Not Getting Any Water Into it to Make Cubes

JOHN SOWDEN

And we'll go now to Dick, in Toledo, here on the Appliance Repair Show. Hi Dick, go ahead.

DICK

Good morning. I've got a problem with an ice maker in an [Amana refrigerator freezer](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

DICK

I'm not getting water. I replaced the tubing, I've replaced the [water valve](#), and I'm not getting any water from the water valve to the [ice maker](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Let's hit the rewind button a little bit here. The original complaint was that you were getting no ice.

DICK

No, no! Well, I'm [not getting any ice](#), because I'm not getting any water to it.

JOHN SOWDEN

So, you're not getting any water to the ice maker?

DICK

Correct.

JOHN SOWDEN

And was the [tube](#) that brings the water to the ice maker itself, was it frozen over?

DICK

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So, that's free and clear. So if water was able to go from the [water valve](#) to the ice maker that would allow it to still flow into the [ice maker](#)?

DICK

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Now, you say you replaced the [water inlet valve](#) as well?

DICK

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

And still no help?

DICK

And still no help.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. How old is the machine?

DICK

It's probably about ten years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. The problem sounds as if it's either in the [ice maker head assembly](#) or possibly, but not as commonly, in the wiring going from the ice maker to the water valve itself. It's not common, but it happens. What you can do is you need to test cycle the [ice maker](#). Then from there you need to see if the [water valve](#) is getting the one hundred and ten volts it's supposed to, normally for about seven seconds towards the end of the harvest cycle, to refill it.

DICK

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

From what you're describing, I'm assuming it's not. Now the other thing that can cause the ice maker to not fill is, if it's not cycling, which would be...how cold is the freezer temperature? It needs to be fifteen degrees or less.

DICK

It is. I poured water into the ice portion of it and it has recycled that ice out.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So it is recognizing the temperature and dumping the ice out of there?

DICK

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. At this point I'd say you either have a bad [ice maker head assembly](#), where the fill portion of it has failed, or you have a situation where you've got a broken wiring harness to the [water valve](#), which is not very common. You can check that with an [ohmmeter](#) (part # DM10T) and check the whole harness for continuity. As far as the ice maker goes, you can replace just the head assembly and I think that's around sixty dollars or you can get a whole new ice maker for around a hundred dollars. So for all the messing around and everything else, just get a new ice maker and throw it in there and continue on.

DICK

Okay. Thank you very much.

2000 Maytag Neptune Front Loading Washing Machine Motor Making Grinding Noise in Rinse Cycle and Not Draining in Spin Cycle

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Mike, in Pewamo, on the Appliance Repair Show. And Mike, first of all you have to tell us where Pewamo is.

MIKE

Pewamo is twenty miles northwest of Lansing.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Okay, well now we know! Go ahead.

MIKE

I have a [Maytag Neptune front loading washing machine](#) that has worked pretty darn well until recently. It's a 2000 model.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So it's one of the first ones that they released?

MIKE

Yes, it is. We load the machine and the water runs into the machine like it should. It gets to the rinse cycle, I believe it's the rinse cycle, and as it begins to move in that cycle, the motor tends to sound like its grinding and the [water doesn't drain from the machine](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Have you had any work done to this unit?

MIKE

Yes, we did have the [control panel](#) on the back of it replaced several years ago.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So you've had the upgrade from the [motor spin board](#) and control unit for that replaced?

MIKE

You know, I'm not positive what the board is for but you could very well be right.

JOHN SOWDEN

From what you're describing, it could be several different things. The noise leads me to believe that it could be in the [bearing](#). When it's trying to go into spin, is that when you're running into this problem?

MIKE

That's right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, and if you need a new rear bearing assembly, then you need a [rear tank assembly](#) (part # 22004465), or the back half of that shell which is quite expensive, even if you do

it yourself. You can't get the bearing other than getting the whole rear plastic assembly because it's all pressed in place. So, you might want to at least inspect the rear of the unit and see if you see any signs of [water dripping](#) down the back. It's also possible, from what you're describing, that just the [drain pump](#) has failed, and it's just not allowing the water to drain out, which would throw the brakes on the rest of the cycle. So at this point, I would say you either have a drain pump that's failed, and normally you can pop that out and see if there's anything stuck in there. If you get buttons and things stuck in there it will make noise when it's trying to drain. If that's not the case, I would suspect that the [rear bearing](#) (part # 22004465) or the main bearing of the tub has failed, and if that's the case you might want to go shopping or at least expect several hundred dollars repairing this machine.

MIKE

Okay. Just hard facts to swallow.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'm not always the good news guy doing this.

MIKE

Just one more quick question: how do you feel about the [front loaders](#) versus the [top loaders](#)?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, the front loaders, I think this year finally outsold, or are comparable to the top loaders for the first time ever, from looking at the numbers. They're picking up in the distribution across the U.S., and I think a lot of that is do to water usage and energy consumption. They normally have a better track record on those than a top loader, because they use a third of the water. As far as being energy efficient, I think they're better. As far as not beating up the clothes so much, most of them are better and there have been front loading machines around for quite some time, but not as many in private homes. Most of the ones out today are fairly reliable and easy to work on, but they're fairly expensive too. You can still go and buy a top loader for two hundred dollars or less somewhere, and you're always going to spend at least several hundred dollars on a front loader.

MIKE

All right. Well, thank you very much. You've been a lot of help.

2005 Hotpoint Side by Side Refrigerator Ice Maker Making Ice but Not Dispensing

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Here's Jerry, in White Lake with another [ice maker](#) question, here on the Appliance Repair Show. Go ahead please, Jerry.

JERRY

I've got a [Hotpoint side by side refrigerator freezer](#). According to the instruction manual it's two and a half years old. It says this book is good for a model 22 or 25.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

JERRY

Here's what it's doing: it's making ice, you can get water out of the door, you can put a glass in and get water, but when you go to hit the crushed push pad or the cubed push pad, I've even tried it with the light on but it will dim, it will make the light dim down and I can't recall if that is normal operation, but you can't get any ice out of there. But yet, you can go in the top, pull the ice tray back, and it's making ice fine.

JOHN SOWDEN

So you have a supply of ice, you just can't get it to come out of that little hole in the door?

JERRY

Right, and you don't hear the motor. See, the motor's not operating. So, I took it out and defrosted the tray, hit that little switch in the back in the upper left corner and shut it off. Defrosted that tray and washed it, just normal maintenance, and I've reached back there manually to that [motor](#), and I've turned it to make sure that motor's not seized up but when you put the assembly back in and you hit that [touch pad](#), nothing is happening as far as crushing or dispensing cubes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well it sounds like you've done some homework and gotten rid of the possibility of a physical ice restriction by cleaning out the [ice bin](#), which is something good to do now and then anyway. It keeps the ice cubes tasting good. What I would say at this point is your problem is either in the auger motor, just because you can physically turn it doesn't mean that it has electrically failed, or possibly a [door switch](#), depending on how your particular unit is wired, but more than likely the problem is in the [circuit board](#) behind the [faceplate](#) of your dispenser assembly.

JERRY

Okay. I had a hunch. I'm a service man for an oil company, so I know my way around it enough. As far as getting that cover off, though, where the touchpads are, visually I can't find any way of getting it off.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, well the lower panel, the catch-all for the bottom, can you pop that [lower tray](#) out?

JERRY

Got it out right now.

JOHN SOWDEN

Are there any [screws](#) around there?

JERRY

No.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Then—

JERRY

I can't feel any even on the lip you kind of see, there's nothing there.

JOHN SOWDEN

The center portion where your display is at, you can actually pop that out if you reach up with your fingers and pull towards you and down a little bit. You can snap out that [dispenser touchpad assembly](#).

JERRY

Really?

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Wouldn't there be a diagram at RepairClinic.com?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, they're all different on a lot of these. You kind of have to use a putty knife to snap it out. If it's like the one I'm thinking about, that he particularly has, I don't have a [model](#) to work with here, but for most of those on the center portion of that touchpad you should have ice and water across the top.

JERRY

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

You just reach up and grab it and pull it out towards you and the whole thing will snap out.

JERRY

It's one of those things where I don't know how much force I can put on it!

JOHN SOWDEN

You might want to get a flashlight and inspection mirror and see if you can tell where the tabs are. At times, you end up breaking some of the plastic and some of the trim pieces are ridiculously expensive to replace. That's the nature of the beast, but I think that particular one just snaps out.

JERRY

So I'll get a putty knife and try that. Look behind there but if that is the case for that [touchpad](#), I can just chest light through it to see if it is getting ohms to it.

JOHN SOWDEN

What you can do on that particular one is, if you want to access the auger assembly, is see if you're getting power to that to start with but make sure that you tape the door [switches](#) shut because with the door open, it's not going to dispense ice.

JERRY

Exactly. Okay. Now where could I get parts for this?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, I would really like it if you go to a website called [RepairClinic.com](#) and get the [model number](#) as it reads off of the unit, not off of the brochure, which we were describing earlier because as you pointed out, your brochure is good for the twenty-two and twenty-five cubic models. What they do is print one brochure for several different model numbers, and in order to get you the proper replacement parts, especially [circuit boards](#), we need the model as it reads right off the unit. Normally, it's going to be on a sticker in the refrigerator section, right up near the ceiling.

JERRY

I'm looking at it right now, and as a matter of fact it doesn't say! It says model number with a big blank.

JOHN SOWDEN

I always have to grab my reading glasses these days to get a better look at that.

JERRY

If you drop down lower you do see a 25 mixed in with a bunch of letters.

JOHN SOWDEN

That's what you're looking for. If you go to our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), you can enter that [model number](#) in and see a picture of all the components for your refrigerator. How that's really beneficial is, at that point you can see what that [touchpad](#) looks like, and then you can see where the locking tabs are at.

JERRY

I will do that, sir. Thank you.

JOHN MCCULLOCH

And I understand that the parts counter is open right now.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'm hoping so!

JOHN MCCULLOCH

If he wants to drive down there and pick up his part today, he can get the whole thing handled.

2005 Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Emitting Bad Odor

JOHN MCCULLOCH

Nathema in West Bloomfield, welcome to the Appliance Repair Show!

NATHEMA

Thank you for taking my call. We have a [Kitchen Aid dishwasher](#) and it is only three years old. I don't use it that often, but now when we use it, it gives an odor, a smell. Usually we clean the plates before we put them in. I was thinking it would smell if there were any remnants of food or whatever but it should go away if there was a little bit of food, but every time we are using it, there's a smell.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay and the smell is not an electrical smell, or anything of that nature. It's working okay?

NATHEMA

No, no, it's very strange. It's not a very prominent smell, but there is a smell.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay and you say you do not use the machine very often?

NATHEMA

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Then that's probably more of the problem, which is that a lot of the water and soap residue is allowed to accumulate, sometimes it will solidify in certain parts of the dishwasher, especially around the [door seal](#) and that's where you get some of your odors. What I would recommend is a product called [Glisten](#) (part # 5303319027). It comes in a packet and you put it in and just run it through your dishwasher.

NATHEMA

Listen?

JOHN SOWDEN

[Glisten](#) (part # 5303319027). G-L-I-S-T-E-N. You can also try a little bit of vinegar. There are several other products out that you can use to help clean out the dishwasher, but I would start with that and see if it helps. Also, does this drain into your [disposal](#)?

NATHEMA

I guess so.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. I would see if that's in fact, the plumbing going from your [dishwasher](#) to your disposal, if that's—

NATHEMA

Oh, you mean...?

JOHN SOWDEN

The [drain hose](#).

NATHEMA

Yes it does.

JOHN SOWDEN

That could be another source, water backing up from that into the [dishwasher](#). So, I would make sure the drain hose is routed properly. What I mean by properly is that it is, higher than the top of the sink. Normally they will use an [air gap](#) (part # 300096) to achieve that; if not then they will have a loop in the [drain hose](#) that will go to the very top of your sink and then down into the disposal. So basically, water can't run uphill.

NATHEMA

Right. I don't know. We had a plumber install it. They installed that because it was a newly built house.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right.

NATHEMA

I'll try to run it with the vinegar.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'd try some cleaners first. If that doesn't help any, then start looking at the drain line and see if that's the problem.

Microwave Interior Paint Flaked Off and Exposed Metal Inside

NATHEMA

I have a second question. Yesterday I was making some corn in the [microwave](#). I usually put it in a plastic bag with some water. Some water drained underneath the [tray](#) and while I was cleaning it, pieces of the paint came out, exposing the metal.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

NATHEMA

That's the first time I've seen that. I put a piece of white paper to cover it, because I know metal should not be in the microwave.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, if you have bare metal that's normally not a good sign. They do make [touch-up paints](#) available that you can either brush on and/or spray on, depending on how big an area.

NATHEMA

It's a small area.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can normally get a small touch-up bottle that looks similar to a bottle of nail polish.

NATHEMA

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can go to our website, RepairClinic.com and visit our [accessories section](#) and we have a section of paints, things of that nature, and it will say if it's for the inside of a [microwave](#) or not. As far as color goes, it's hard to match the color exactly on a lot of those, but seeing as it's on the underside of the plate I wouldn't be too concerned about that as much as just getting that covered up.

NATHEMA

Okay. Can I use it today if I put the white paper over it?

JOHN SOWDEN

I would recommend not using it if you can avoid it, until you can get that sealed up.