

## Appliance Repair Show Transcript—September 28, 2008

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### Topics Discussed:

- [Whirlpool Refrigerator Interior Light Doesn't Work After Bulb Replacement](#)
- [1995 Electric Dryer Ran for a Few Seconds and then Shut Off](#)
- [2003 Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Leaking Out of Bottom Corner](#)
- [Kenmore Top Loading Washing Machine Leaving Soap Residue on Clothes](#)
- [2005 Side by Side Refrigerator Freezer Fan Cycling On and Off Every Few Seconds](#)
- [1995 GE Spacemaker Microwave Not Working](#)
- [Panasonic Countertop Microwave Light Bulb Burned Out and Needs Replacement](#)
- [Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Pre-Rinse Dispenser Cup Will Not Close](#)
- [Maytag Top Loading Washing Machine Intermittently Overflowing the Tub](#)
- [Kitchen Aid Top Mount Refrigerator Freezer Shelf Supports Breaking Off](#)
- [1995 Kenmore Side by Side Refrigerator Leaking Water into Bottom of Freezer](#)

### Whirlpool Refrigerator Interior Light Doesn't Work After Bulb Replacement

JOHN SOWDEN

Right now we're going to talk to Carl in Warren. Good morning, Carl.

CARL

Good morning and thank you for taking my call. I'm trying to troubleshoot a [refrigerator](#) for my sister-in-law. It is a Whirlpool, 22 cubic foot. The interior light does not come on. I put a new [light bulb](#) in it, and it still didn't come on. The [switch](#) for that light is right in the door opening, right at the top.

JOHN SOWDEN

Correct.

CARL

I pulled that out and jumped that, but it still did not come on. Now, the [refrigerator](#) is running fine otherwise. So anyway, what do you think I can do to get this thing working?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if you jumped out the [switch](#) and it's still not working, then I'd say the switch is probably not the problem. It's possible that you have a bad wire or something in the wiring harness, which is a very uncommon problem. Most often the problem is in the socket itself. What's happening is the [bulb](#) is not making good contact in the base of it.

CARL

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

I'd make sure that the [bulb](#) you replaced it with, the new one, is in fact good. Check it in another lamp socket you have.

CARL

And I did do that. I tested it.

JOHN SOWDEN

Good. Sometimes it's just a matter of not seating the bulb all the way in there. If you unscrew the bulb and take a very, very thin film of Vaseline and put it on the base, again you just want to put a little bit to help lubricate it you might be able to get an extra turn or two to help seat that. If not, then I would start with the socket. The only way to do that is to see when you open up the door, if you're getting voltage to the socket. That would mean a live voltage check, which I don't recommend unless you're comfortable working with electricity.

CARL

And I am.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So really, you just need to see if you're getting power to the socket. If not, then the socket is bad.

CARL

Now that socket, would that be accessible from the rear of the [refrigerator](#), from the back?

JOHN SOWDEN

Most of them snap into the inner liner.

CARL

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you go to our [website](#), put in the [model number](#) as it reads off of the machine, you'll see a picture of the socket. Seeing what it looks like might help with the removal of it.

CARL

Okay, because getting at that from the front of the refrigerator, that's a long way to reach back!

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, [side by sides](#) sometimes can be not much fun to work on, because your shoulders are so wide and the cabinet isn't.

CARL

This isn't a side by side, it's just a regular refrigerator, but it's quite deep.

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

CARL

So, that's what I was thinking. The only thing I could think of was the socket. I was trying to imagine what else could be wrong. I was wondering if there was a second [bulb](#), like in a series, where if one went out, the other would go out, but that's not the case, correct?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, normally they're individual. It depends on the unit. Some of the newer ones have a [circuit board](#) with a relay on it, and that switch is actually breaking a low voltage to the control cycle but I don't think that's the case in your particular one. If you look at the underside of the unit you'll find a tech sheet, and you might want to look at that to see how your particular unit is wired.

CARL

Okay, I can do that. This is an old [refrigerator](#), so I don't think it would have anything like that but I'll do some further investigation, sir. Thank you so much for your help.

### **1995 Electric Dryer Ran for a Few Seconds and then Shut Off**

JOHN SOWDEN

Paul from Ann Arbor, what's your question today?

PAUL

Yes, I've got an approximately thirteen year old [electric dryer](#). I started it up this morning, and it ran for about fifteen seconds and died. The light switch is working. You hear the [timer](#) clicking along. I've got power to the dryer, but nothing else.

JOHN SOWDEN

When you say you have power to the dryer, you have—

PAUL

Yeah, I've got power to the dryer: I've checked my breaker, I plugged it in, I used my [multimeter](#) (part # DM10T) to make sure everything was coming through the dryer itself from the power source. The question I have is I got on the [RepairClinic.com](#) website...

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, good for you!

PAUL

And, it said to check the [thermal fuse](#) on the blower housing cover?

JOHN SOWDEN

That is correct.

PAUL

Is that supposed to read any sort of resistance?

JOHN SOWDEN

Normally it reads a small resistance, one or two ohms. What you're looking for is if it's open or closed. You can bypass that and check it if you wanted to, but I don't recommend using the [dryer](#) with it not in the cycle.

PAUL

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

So, you can bypass those, the two wires going to it, to see if it works and that's where I was heading. If it just died, normally a [thermal fuse](#) would cause that situation.

PAUL

That's what I was kind of thinking. So, I can just bypass that fuse, and if it works then just order up a new fuse from you guys?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yeah, I would do that for testing purposes only, and you can just check it with a meter.

PAUL

Yes, of course.

JOHN SOWDEN

But if you find the thermal fuse has tripped, then you've got an overheat condition. So you've got a plugged [vent](#), or you've got an [element](#) that's shorted out. Possibly it's on all the time, or one of your [control thermostats](#) is sticking and not turning the [dryer](#) off at the proper temperature inside the drum. So normally a thermal fuse problem is a sign that something else is going wrong.

PAUL

All right. So there's not an easy fix, then huh?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if it's a matter of a plugged [vent](#) then—

PAUL

I pulled it out and the vents weren't plugged. I keep it clean anyway.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

PAUL

I run the shop vac and all that through it and make sure everything is cleaned out. But all right, I'll give that a shot. I know it's an old dryer but I'm hoping to get it to last for a few more months.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if it's just the [thermal fuse](#), or even an [element](#) or a [thermostat](#), it's still much cheaper than a new machine and actually, as far as the design of a new one versus the one you have, most of the components are about the same, so you're not buying a better mousetrap, per say. So, I'd start with the thermal fuse.

PAUL

Okay. Well, thank you very much.

### **2003 Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Leaking Out of Bottom Corner**

JOHN SOWDEN

Now we're going to speak to Don who's on his car phone. Good morning, Don.

DON

Good morning!

JOHN SOWDEN

And how are you this morning?

DON

I'm fine, thank you.

JOHN SOWDEN

All except for the [dishwasher](#), right?

DON

[I've got a dishwasher that's leaking.](#)

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Can you provide me with any details?

DON

I'm in the car, so I don't have the [model number](#), but it's an approximately five year old [Kitchen Aid dishwasher](#). In one corner is where the water seems to be coming out when the dishwasher runs.

JOHN SOWDEN

Does it do this every time, or it's intermittent?

DON

It does it every time, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, the first thing you want to do with that particular unit is make sure it's really level. If the unit is slightly tilted forward, what happens when the [pump](#) starts up is the water will kind of wave out the corners of the door. So, I would make sure the unit is level, and if not, then just slightly tilted back. The other thing you want to inspect is that the [wash arm](#) turns freely and that you have no holes in your [silverware basket](#) that would allow a utensil to stick through and stop the wash arm, which then causes it to spray directly into the corners of the door and can cause leaks.

DON

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

If that all looks good, I would start looking at the [door seal](#) itself, but I would say most often just making sure it's level, and you might want to remove the [lower panel](#) if you can and have a look at when it's doing it in the cycle and exactly where the water is coming from because at times, it might look like [it's leaking](#) out the front but it could be leaking out the side of the tank and running down and just dripping out the front of the machine. So sometimes where the water drips from and where it's coming from are two different spots.

DON

All right. That makes a lot of sense.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. That gives you something to do this morning when you get home.

DON

Thank you so much.

### **Kenmore Top Loading Washing Machine Leaving Soap Residue on Clothes**

JOHN SOWDEN

Joe, in Detroit, has a question on a [Kenmore washer](#). Good morning, Joe.

JOE

My wife was telling me that on the final rinse she still gets a soap residue on the clothes, and she wants to know what the problem is.

JOHN SOWDEN

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

JOE

Yeah, it's a top loading one.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay and the clothes are not being rinsed out properly?

JOE

Yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Now, the first thing I will always say when you have soap residue left is, how much soap are you using, what water temperature are you using, are you using the right soap for that water temperature, all that good stuff.

JOE

She's also on the line. She can answer all these questions for you.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay!

WIFE

Yes, I use the right amount of soap, and the water is cold. The rinse is cold.

JOHN SOWDEN

And you're using the cold water soap, made for the cold water application?

WIFE

When I wash I use warm water for washing, and then for rinsing it's cold.

JOHN SOWDEN

Right. Warm wash and cold rinse. So you're using regular detergent?

WIFE

The Tide brand quick dissolving detergent.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. And are you measuring the detergent as you put it in? Are you using the cap to measure it?

WIFE

Yeah, yeah.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Good, because a lot of people are pourers, where they just give it a good pour. So, you are measuring it properly. The first thing I would do is to make sure the unit is

spinning all the water out between the regular wash and the rinse cycle. Make sure that the clothes are spinning out and it is basically getting rid of all the water between the two. If that's the case, I would make sure when it fills for the rinse cycle that you are getting a full fill back into the tank and the clothes are spinning out. If all that seems to be okay, I would try cutting back on the soap, maybe cut it in half and see if that helps out because a lot of the newer detergents are pretty concentrated, so it can cause some issues, especially if you have soft water. If you have hard water you want to add a little more. I would start with making sure the unit spins out between the cycles, getting rid of the first amount of wash water. Then if that all works and it fills back up and drains properly again, I would cut your soap in half and see if that helps.

WIFE

But this water we have here is hard water.

JOHN SOWDEN

Is it Detroit city water?

WIFE

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. I don't know how hard that is. Normally over three or four grains is considered hard. I honestly don't know. You can even get it tested, or you could call the water commission and ask how hard the water is. They should have the answer to that question. On your detergent it will normally tell you, for hard water you want to add more by twenty percent or whatever it is. So, I'd read the directions on the soap and find out what you're dealing with. But first I'd just try cutting back on the soap and see if that helps out.

JOE

I had a question.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure!

JOE

How can I make sure all the soap water comes out?

JOHN SOWDEN

After the unit spins out for the wash cycle and it stops and starts to fill again—just before it starts—open the lid and make sure there's no water that's remaining in the tank itself.

JOE

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

If it's not, you could have something caught in your [pump](#) or something of that nature that's not allowing it to drain all the soapy water out.

JOE  
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN  
So that's an easy one to do. Just fire it up; you have to sit there and babysit it, but just wait for the main wash cycle. Then after it stops and it's just ready to fill again, open the lid and see what you have.

JOE  
Okay.

### **2005 Side by Side Refrigerator Freezer Fan Cycling On and Off Every Few Seconds**

JOHN SOWDEN  
Good morning, Jim in Canton! You have a question on a [side by side refrigerator](#)?

JIM  
Yes sir.

JOHN SOWDEN  
Okay.

JIM  
It is a side by side, I bought it in 2005 and I think it's just the freezer side. I don't know if there's a [fan](#), but something is like cycling, I think it's a fan, that's cycling like for two or three seconds, and then it stops and then it kicks back on again for two or three seconds, and then it stops. It's doing it right now, I'm sitting here right next to it and it's working fine, but it just doesn't seem right that a motor or a fan should be cycling and stopping in that short interval or time.

JOHN SOWDEN  
Now, you say you're not losing any refrigeration temperatures? Everything is cold inside the refrigerator?

JIM  
Yes, and in the freezer, I hear it more when I open the freezer door. I can hear it from the [refrigerator](#) side, but it's more when I open the freezer door that I hear this pulsing of a motor or a fan.

JOHN SOWDEN  
Right. Well actually in your particular unit the [freezer fan](#) is made to run at different speeds. Some are two speed and some are actually three speed; they will have three different speeds that the fan will run, according to temperature. So if the unit is sensing

that you need to have more cold air pushed into the refrigerator or circulated throughout the freezer, it will speed up the fan motor and then slow it down as you start to reach temperature. On a lot of the newer machines the compressor will run most often, more than any machine you've owned in the past. So, the compressor running all the time is actually normal; what they do is speed up or slow down the fan to circulate the air through both cabinets to maintain the proper temperature. Now, when you open the door, it depends on the unit and what [board](#) it has in it, but a lot of times it will slow down the fan so you're not pulling in hot moist air into the freezer section.

JIM  
Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So, the moding of the [fan motor](#) is normal. Now, if it's that quick, every three to five seconds, you could have a situation where there's a [thermistor](#), which is a temperature sensing device, which could be failing and sending the wrong signal to the [control board](#) and causing it to short cycle the fan. Or the relay board, the main control board, could have a stuck or intermittent relay where it's jumping in and out and causing it to turn the fan on and off, or the fan itself is starting to fail but for the fan to turn on and off and mode according to temperature and door openings is normal. If you're getting every three to five seconds and it's pretty consistent, I would start looking at the controls. The three components are the [thermistor](#), the [freezer fan motor](#), and then the [control board](#). In that case, there's a tech sheet normally on the underside of the unit that will help you as far as what it's supposed to do and when and how to check some things. But you might end up having a service person out on this one if it keeps up.

JIM  
All right. Appreciate it.

### **1995 GE Spacemaker Microwave Not Working**

JOHN SOWDEN

We're now going to talk to Bob, in Warren, who's got a question about a microwave.  
Good morning, Bob.

BOB

Good morning! I have a [GE Spacemaker microwave](#) and somebody just tried to use it, and noticed that it was dead. I came and looked at it, and basically, [it doesn't do anything](#). There aren't any lights on, there's no timer, no anything!

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So, it's not that it doesn't heat anything; it's just no display, as if there's no power to it?

BOB  
Exactly right.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Well, the first thing you need to do is make sure there is power to it. There's a plug above the unit; every house is different, so make sure it's not a blown fuse or breaker in your home.

BOB

I did that already.

JOHN SOWDEN

All right. Well, if that's okay then the problem lies more than likely internally in the unit, and that would probably be a blown fuse. There is an [internal fuse](#) on the microwave itself that will fail if there are any problems with the microwave. Now, at times, it's just a bad fuse...do you have any door slammers in the family?

BOB

Not really, no.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, because what happens is, there's a series of switches in the door assembly that have to close in sequence in order for the unit to work. If those [door switches](#) close out of sequence it will automatically take out the fuse. It's wired that way so you can't run the [microwave](#) with the door open, or if the door components should break, then it would in fact take out the fuse entirely. Now, when it comes to microwaves, unless you're really well versed with electronics, I always recommend calling a service person, because even though the unit's unplugged, it still can give you a pretty nasty shock or worse. There's a [capacitor](#) which stores electrical energy in the microwave, so even if it's unplugged, if you touch the wrong wire inside you can get a nasty shock.

BOB

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So, I would recommend having somebody come out and look at this for you. Now, the other thing is that if you are able to take it off the wall, there are a lot of places that will charge a nominal fee to diagnose the microwave. So, you might be able to save a few bucks on a service call if you find somebody who has a shop that will take it over the counter. Most of the time it's twenty to thirty bucks to diagnose the unit. It all depends on how much time and effort you want to put into it versus how much money you want to put into it.

BOB

Right. At this point in time, do you think a thirteen year old microwave is worth even fiddling with?

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, if it's something simple, like a [door switch](#) that's sticking and a blown [fuse](#), I'd say it probably wouldn't be worth throwing away at this time, because if you replace it you have to mount a new one to the wall and all that good stuff. Another question I have, though is have you noticed it taking longer to heat food and things of that nature as time has gone on.

BOB

No, nobody had noticed that.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay, because as time goes on it's not uncommon for the magnetron or mag tube to get weak over time, so what used to take three and a half minutes for the popcorn is now taking four and a half, and it takes more run time to cook the food. A lot of it has to do with luck and how much you use the machine, or how much you tax the mag tube every time. This is a good time to look at that though. You can get another over the counter [microwave](#) these days for a few hundred bucks.

BOB

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

If you decide to install it yourself, you'll save yourself the seventy to a hundred dollar installation fee, and that's all weighed against replacement. But if you can get it down and for twenty or thirty bucks find out what the problem is and what it costs to repair it, you'd be wasting a few bucks if you'd rather just buy a new one. But it's not a bad risk.

BOB

Okay. That sounds pretty good. Very informative! Thank you very much.

### **Panasonic Countertop Microwave Light Bulb Burned Out and Needs Replacement**

JOHN SOWDEN

We are now going to talk to Pat, in Southgate, who's got another [microwave](#) question. Good morning!

RICHARD

Good morning.

JOHN SOWDEN

And what's your question this morning?

RICHARD

This is Richard. I'm her husband. I'm the one that's going to fix this, if I can.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay.

RICHARD

The [bulb](#) is out in my [Panasonic microwave](#). With all the manuals we have for our appliances, guess which one I can't find?

JOHN SOWDEN

The one you need!

RICHARD

So where's my light, and how do I get to it?

JOHN SOWDEN

The [light bulb](#) is out? Is this a [countertop unit](#), or an [over the range](#)?

RICHARD

It's a countertop.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Most often the light bulb and the socket are one part. So, the reason you can't unscrew it is because they're glued in the socket at the factory so you have to replace the bulb and the socket as one complete piece.

RICHARD

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

Now, I unfortunately do not have a picture, out of the thousands and thousands of pictures that we have on our website, [RepairClinic.com](#), so I can't answer your question specifically but the vast majority of them these days are all one piece. You're probably going to end up getting the [light bulb](#) and the socket as one assembly which is something that if you give us a call at our office, our number at [RepairClinic.com](#) is 1-888-343-4948; somebody might be able to answer that question as to how that particular one comes. Now as far as getting at it, a lot of times you have to take the wrapper off the unit.

RICHARD

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

And again, I don't know if you listened to the last caller, but microwaves are something that I don't normally recommend that people work on, because if you get tied up in the high voltage end of it where the [capacitor](#) is located, you can get a nasty shock. A lot of them will not even let you into the cabinet, and what I mean by that is they'll have special [screws](#) where you need a special bit just to get into the cabinet. So in this case, again, if it's a [countertop](#), you might be able to drop it off somewhere and they can change the bulb for twenty or thirty bucks.

RICHARD

Everything works. You just can't see inside it.

JOHN SOWDEN

And that's something that you could give a call somewhere and ask what it would cost to do this and if it's not worth the price to be able to see what's going on, you can just continue to work it in the dark until it reaches its normal life span.

RICHARD

One more question.

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure.

### **Kitchen Aid Dishwasher Pre-Rinse Dispenser Cup Will Not Close**

RICHARD

On a [Kitchen Aid dishwasher](#), when you open the door there are two little drawers to put the fluid in. One of the doors sprung and it won't close; everything works but it won't close. Is that critical, or is it hard to change one of those?

JOHN SOWDEN

How old is the [dishwasher](#)?

RICHARD

Old!

JOHN SOWDEN

So the pre-rinse is not closing, or the main wash side is not closing?

RICHARD

The pre-wash.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. What happens is, when you close that there's what they call a bi-metal on the back side of that.

RICHARD

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

It snaps into place and locks that in. As it gets time for it to dispense the soap, the [timer](#) senses a signal, depending on the unit—normally it's through the motor circuit, and it will cause that bi-metal to warp and release that cup. So if it's not that sticking, I'd say that bi-metal is probably shot, meaning it hasn't worked back into its original position.

RICHARD

Right. Can you take the door off or anything to really do that?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, you do. I'd turn the power off to the unit, open the door, and if you look around the perimeter of the door there's two [screws](#) on each side. You take them off and remove the front panel; then the [front panel](#) should just kind of pop off and you can then access the [soap cup assembly](#). If you need replacement parts, just get the [model number](#) as it reads off of the [dishwasher](#). It should be in a tag along the frame, normally it's the left or right-hand side. Go to our [website](#), put the model number, and you'll see a picture of all the common replacement parts for your unit.

RICHARD

Very good, I thank you. Have a good day!

### **Maytag Top Loading Washing Machine Intermittently Overflowing the Tub**

JOHN SOWDEN

We have Dan, in Ypsilanti, who has a question on a [Maytag washer](#). Good morning, Dan.

DAN

Good morning, John. Thanks for taking my call. Yeah, we have a [washing machine that will just overflow the tub](#).

JOHN SOWDEN

Is this all the time, or just intermittent?

DAN

Pardon?

JOHN SOWDEN

Does it do this all the time, or just periodically?

DAN

It doesn't do it all the time. When it does do it, if you move the [timer](#) a little bit it will move on to the next cycle.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. Now when you say it [overflows the tub](#), you mean the water just keeps coming in?

DAN

Right.

JOHN SOWDEN

And, it just goes over the top of the main tub and floods the floor?

DAN  
Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN  
All right.

DAN  
But, there's a drain right next to it.

JOHN SOWDEN  
That's always a good thing! And, you say it's doing it more often than not?

DAN  
It happens maybe fifty percent of the time.

JOHN SOWDEN  
Okay. Well, this is either something that is caused by a mechanical problem, or an electrical problem. If you are filling the washing machine and you unplug it, if it continues to fill, then it is not an electrical problem, because it's obviously unplugged. So if it continues to fill after you unplug it, then the [water inlet valve](#) is mechanically sticking open, which would cause it to just continue to fill. At that point, you'd want to replace the water inlet valve. If it does shut off, then I would start leaning more towards the [water level or pressure switch](#), which is the component that tells it, okay, the tub's full now, turn off, and let's advance and get to the next cycle. There's a small [hose](#) that goes from that pressure switch to the bottom of the tank. If that hose is plugged, or if it has a hole in it, it will cause the pressure switch to not act properly, and you'll run into the same problem. In order to get at that you need to access the [control panel](#), and there are normally just a few screws at the top and you can pull the control panel toward you and get into the components. So, I'd start with the first test, run it, and especially if you can babysit it, go downstairs, do some laundry and see if it overfills, and unplug it. Again, if it keeps filling then the [water inlet valve](#) is bad; if not then I would lean towards the pressure switch, but inspect that hose first before you replace the pressure switch, because it's not uncommon that in spin that little hose can rub and get a hole in it. If you just have some debris in there and it isn't allowing the air pressure to reach the pressure switch, than you can just replace the hose for a few dollars.

DAN  
Okay. So it's not the dial, it's not that it just isn't advancing?

JOHN SOWDEN  
No, the [timer](#) itself won't advance until there's a proper amount of water that it's sensing in the tank.

DAN  
Okay. And I've seen it happen at the rinse part and also at the main wash cycle, when it's cycling for the original wash.

JOHN SOWDEN

Either one is obviously an intermittent problem, so when it's filling it doesn't matter what cycle.

DAN

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

So again, I'd start with the [water inlet valve](#). From what you're describing, I'd lean more toward the pressure switch system; either the [hose](#) or the [switch](#) itself is sticking.

DAN

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

But again, but if [it's starting to overflow](#), unplug it. If the water continues to come in, then you know it's not an electrical problem and the water inlet valve has had it.

DAN

Okay. Can I ask another quick question?

JOHN SOWDEN

Real quick! What have you got?

### **Kitchen Aid Top Mount Refrigerator Freezer Shelf Supports Breaking Off**

DAN

I've got a [Kitchen Aid refrigerator](#). The top freezer, one of the posts that support the [shelf](#) has broken off. Is that something that can be replaced?

JOHN SOWDEN

Sure can. Just get the [model number](#) off the refrigerator as it reads off the unit, and not the brochure or owner's manual. Put the model number into [RepairClinic.com](#) and you'll see a picture of all the components and you can order that post. Some are screwed in place and some actually have a small metal tab on the back. What you'll do is take a pair of [pliers](#) (part # D203-5) and turn it a quarter turn, and then pull it out. To seat the new one, it's the same thing: push it in, and turn it to lock those tabs.

DAN

Okay.

JOHN SOWDEN

You can see what the other back half of that looks like by viewing the picture, in order to get it out.

DAN

Okay, sounds good. Thanks a lot, sir.

### **1995 Kenmore Side by Side Refrigerator Leaking Water into Bottom of Freezer**

JOHN SOWDEN

We're now going to speak to Greg, in Canton, who's got a question about a [side by side](#) that's leaking water. Good morning, Greg.

GREG

Hey, John. We've got a [Kenmore side by side](#) and it's about thirteen years old. On the freezer side, as you're facing it, there are inconsistent pools of water. Sometimes it will go two or three days without being there. We went on vacation for a week, came home, and there was no water there at all. The water to the [ice maker](#) and water is turned off on it. I think it has something to do probably with the opening and shutting of the freezer door, but I'll leave it up to you!

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. So, you're getting this intermittent puddle. Is it a lot of water or just a little bit of water?

GREG

It's more than the cat can drink.

JOHN SOWDEN

Well, that might explain why the problem is intermittent is the cat might be clearing it up for you periodically then.

GREG

Yeah, I don't think that's it, but it could be.

JOHN SOWDEN

You have a [freezer basket](#) in the bottom, in the lower part of the freezer section?

GREG

Yes.

JOHN SOWDEN

Do you notice any ice or water on the freezer floor?

GREG

Well, we've cleaned that on several occasions, because we were trying to determine where it's coming from so I could better explain to you what's going on. Yeah, at times there is ice buildup down there.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. What that tells me is that you have a plugged drain for your defrost system. What happens is, if you remove the shelving in the back wall of that freezer, there are normally a series of screws around the perimeter. Once that's off, you'll see the cooling coil or the evaporator. There's a [drain trough](#) underneath that catches the water as it goes into defrost, and it's supposed to drain the water through that little trough, down through a tube that goes into a [pan](#) underneath the refrigerator. That's restricted somehow. A lot of times what you can do is, once you access it, is take a [turkey baster](#) (part # 19950151) full of hot tap water and flush the drain out. You might find a bunch of crud that ends up in the pan on the underside of the unit. That restriction will cause the water instead of dripping through the appropriate channels, which is through the trough and then the small tube on the underside, to run out the freezer floor, and then out the freezer door. So this is something that, if you do it yourself, you might want to turn the machine off so that it thaws out a little bit. That makes it a little easier if the drain isn't frozen to clear it. You might want to take some warm water and thaw out that area.

GREG

Can I do this entire thing from the front?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes.

GREG

And then, am I removing something to get to that drain plug?

JOHN SOWDEN

Yes, you have to remove all the [shelves](#) in your freezer and then normally along the side walls there are the rails where the baskets slide into, or the posts. Every machine is different but basically, you have to get that back panel off and there's a series of screws around the perimeter of the underside. Take off five or six screws, and then you can ease out that back wall and expose the cooling coil. The trough I'm describing is below that. You normally have a little incline that goes up into that area, and that's where the drain is. There's a hole in the middle of that, or off to one side, and that's where it's plugged.

GREG

Okay. The [pan](#) that you're talking about, that's underneath, is that accessible from the front?

JOHN SOWDEN

The pan, it depends on the unit. Some are removable, where you can take the pan out and clean it, and others are part of the lower base assembly. On a lot of the newer units it's one plastic pan that the compressor sits in, so it's not easily serviceable. How old is this machine?

GREG

Thirteen years old.

JOHN SOWDEN

Okay. You might have a removable [drain pan](#) for that. What you need to do to look and see if you can get the [model number](#) off the refrigerator; then go to [RepairClinic.com](#) and you can see if the drain pan is a one piece part for that. Now from the information I see on the screen here, it looks like you might have given me the serial number for the machine. It's confusing at times, I know.

GREG

It says Series Number 5547, but that didn't seem to get me anywhere.

JOHN SOWDEN

No. There's a sticker on it somewhere that has the model and serial number, and you have to get the complete model number and you can get most questions answered at our [website](#). Being in Canton, if you need any parts for it you can just shoot down to Michigan Avenue and Beck and get what you need.

GREG

Great! Thank you so much.