

## APPLIANCE DOCTOR

### Check defrost timer on your refrigerator



JOE  
GAGNON

In this column I thought I would do something different by giving you some do-it-yourself information on repairs that can be attempted by the homeowner. Please keep in mind that appliances have electricity flowing through them and it is not meant to flow through you. Pull the plug.

One of the most common service calls on a refrigerator is related to the defrost system. The defrost timer which you can compare to a clock fails to advance to put the refrigerator into the defrost mode. There is a heater inside the freezer compartment which is attached to the freezer coils. The defrost timer which is constantly turning gets to a certain point at which the refrigerator stops running completely for a period of 30 minutes.

During this 30 minutes the timer is

sending power to this heater and melting the snow accumulation on the freezer coils. Place your hand in front of you and open your fingers imagining them as the freezer coils. Picture a small amount of frost on each finger and blow air with your mouth through all your fingers. This is how a fan motor circulates cold air throughout the complete refrigerator and freezer.

Now let's say the defrost timer stopped running and didn't advance to the defrost mode. The heater never came on and as a result the snow began to build up real thick around your fingers, to the point that you can not blow air through your fingers anymore.

The fan motor can no longer pull cold air from the freezer coils and the first place you will notice this is in the refrigerator section. Temperatures will soar to 50 and 60 degrees. The most common cure to this problem is to change the defrost timer, but wait, let's test the timer first. The hardest thing

See GAGNON, 11D

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