

APPLIANCE DOCTOR

Voice your views on appliance act



JOE GAGNON

The Appliance Repair Act, House Bill 5833 sponsored by state Rep. Lyn Bankes is getting some action. There is a public hearing on this bill scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Monday, June 10 at the Livonia City Hall at Five Mile and Farmington Road. In attendance will be members of the appliance industry and also consumers who would like to voice their opinions on the service industry.

Joe Dulcey of WXYZ-TV will be doing a followup to his recent investigative report on unethical service. I must again thank many of you for your interest and response to this bill and I do hope to meet many of you on June 10.

Hot weather alert

As the onset of summer hits the area, so does the need for service technicians to repair refrigerators, freezers, dehumidifiers and room air conditioners. Since last October I have been preaching the things consumers have to do before the temperature hits 80 degrees.

It is obvious by the many hundreds of phone calls I'm receiving that not everybody reads this column and that's a darn shame. Here is an example of what is happening at my business at an escalating rate, and it's not really very hot yet.

Caller: I need a service man to check out my refrigerator, it's not cooling very well and my food is spoiling.

Joe: How old and what kind of refrigerator do you have?

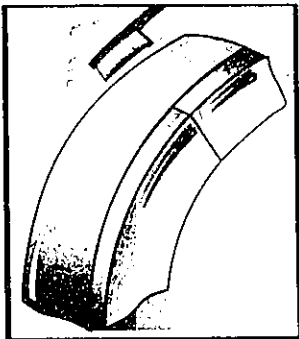
Caller: It's a soundso, with a freezer on the top.

Joe: Do you clean the condenser underneath the refrigerator every four months or so?

Caller: The what?

Joe: The condenser, the radiator underneath, the tubing which if not kept clean will burn out the compressor or create the kind of problems you're having. When is the last time you cleaned it?

Caller: Oh, heck, I'll bet it's been years since I've cleaned it. It's been so long I forgot how. How do you clean it?



Joe: You pull the plug on the refrigerator, you use a long handle brush available at the hardware store, and you plug in the vacuum cleaner. That's how you clean it. Now caller, let me tell you something of interest. For every month you've operated this refrigerator with a dirty condenser it has cost you \$10 in wasted energy consumption. That's quite a sum you've burned up in the last few years.

Caller: How much do you charge to have a man do it for me?

Joe: The average total charge is \$66.

Caller: Click...

In most of these cases the home owner cleans the dirty condenser and no longer needs a service technician. The refrigerator may have run fine during the winter, but the warmer temperatures and a dirty condenser will create such a heat burden on the compressor, that it will fail to do its job.

I have written a book, pamphlets, done seminars, television shows, heard by millions on radio and yet there are still dirty condensers out there. Thank you for reading this column in this newspaper. You're that much smarter than the person who doesn't.

Joe Gagnon, the Appliance Doctor, will answer your questions about maintaining and repairing large appliances. Gagnon is president of Carmack Appliances in Garden City and does a weekly radio program on WJR-AM. He is author of "First Aid from the Appliance Doctor," available at area bookstores.

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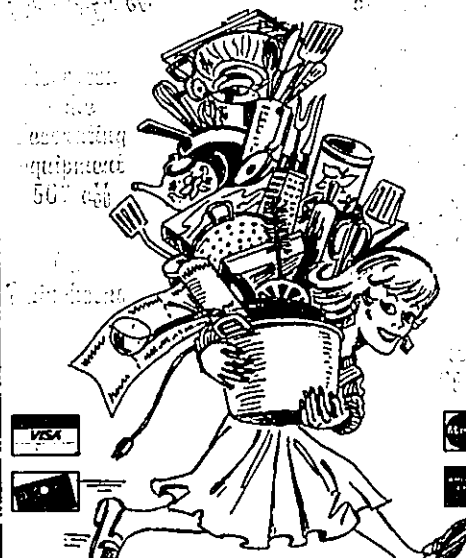
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