

APPLIANCE DOCTOR

Service contracts need careful checking



JOE GAGNON

The other day listening to a news broadcast I heard a story on the subject of a consumers problem with service on her television set. She had purchased the set from Fretter Appliance and also signed up for the additional five year service contract. Now the set needed service and she couldn't get through to Fretters and she doesn't know what to do.

The news reporter tried as well without success, and finally upon a personal visit was told by an employee that she didn't have a clue as to what the consumer should do. In other words, tough luck.

When Highland Appliance went out of business, and now Fretter, the situation may present a serious problem for the innocent customer who purchased an extended service contract. The money that you have paid up front for this contract has been set aside, and we would hope that the failing business has made provisions for the care of your product. If that's not the case, we would

then think it appropriate that the monies would be returned to us. The past few years have shown us just the opposite is happening, so I recommend that whenever you purchase the additional service contract on a product, you make inquiries on what happens to your contract if the business should go out of business.

A radio listener called and asked what was going on inside his microwave because the food was only cooking on the left side of the oven cavity. Let me give you a picture of why this can happen and what the problem could be. Imagine an upstairs hallway with an overhead fan pushing air down the stairway. Without that fan the air can not travel downstairs and the same analogy applies to your microwave.

The microwave is sent down a passageway into the ceiling of the oven cavity and from there it has to be directed into the space where the food is placed. This is accomplished with the use of a stirrer blade which is under the ceiling cover which you should clean once in a while. That blade is set at certain angles to disperse the waves into the oven as evenly as possible.

Some of these blades are driven by air from a blower motor and others are

driven by a little motor. If the motor should fail or the nut which holds the blade falls off, then you will cook in only one area. This is not such a serious problem which can't be repaired at a reasonable cost by a qualified technician. I would suggest that you check out the reputation of a service company before you take your microwave into them for repairs.

The other day a senior citizen reported that a manufacturer replaced the motor assembly on her washing machine even though another independent service company wouldn't repair it. I felt good for her until later when I discovered that her washer was 26 years old and she spent in excess of \$200 to have the motor replaced. Just how much longer does she think that washer will work before a rust hole

appears inside the inner drum? Does spending that amount of money on that old of a machine really justify itself? With the brand of machine this woman owns, I can assure you that it was not a wise investment on her part. Stop and think a few minutes before you commit to wasting your dollars.

If you have a question or complaint about the appliance sales and service industry, why don't you drop me a line and send it to the address of your local Observer & Eccentric newspaper. I'd love to help you.

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.

Franklin antiques show slated

The Franklin Community Church Antiques Show, featuring more than 30 quality dealers and the Herb Society of America, will take place Friday-Saturday, Oct. 25-26, at 32473 Normandy in Franklin.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Oct. 25 and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 26. General

admission is \$5.

A preview reception will take place 6-9 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 24. Cost is \$35 per person. Advance reservations are required.

Call (810) 626-6606 for information.

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