

HOME WORK

Complete maintenance checks on appliances this summer

APPLIANCE DOCTOR



JOE GAGNON

In the last few days I received calls from consumers who had problems with their clothes dryers. The dryer won't tumble or there is an odor coming out of the product.

In each one of these cases, there was a dead squirrel inside the mechanical component. To prevent this from happening in your home, you need to go outside and make sure the flapper is clean and

closes all the way. This can best be accomplished by using a tooth brush confirming that the hinges are clean.

Service technicians are very busy these hot days cleaning out the condensers underneath refrigerators. The biggest reason why refrigerators break down during the summer and not the winter is because they can't take the heat of summer when the condenser is dirty and covered with lint, dust, and animal hair. Stop by a hardware store and purchase a refrigerator condenser brush, turn off the refrigerator, get the vacuum cleaner out and shake loose the dirt that is built up. A clean condenser can save you up to \$10 per month on utility cost.

Take a walk throughout your

home and look and see how many extension cords you have plugged in for different products. Check these cords by holding them in your hand and if they are hot, you could be in for a dangerous or expensive situation. Any extension cord used should always be of the same gauge wire that comes with the product used or even bigger gauge. When those little tiny extension cords are used you risk causing damage to the product or even a fire.

I don't think there is anything more beautiful than watching ants work. Their energy puts most humans to shame, but when you see these little guys walk across your kitchen sink, you want to scream.

Remember that your kitchen

carries the food load for you and your family. An area so overlooked in the kitchen is under the dishwasher which is never moved except for service or replacement. Take the two screws off that hold the bottom kick panel and look under there with a flashlight. You will be amazed at how many little particles of food have been kicked under there for so many years. Another area that ants love is your garbage disposer which should be cleaned every few weeks. Fill it with ice cubes and let them sit for an hour and then turn it on. The little ants are doing what comes naturally, looking for food and water.

The washing machine washes best on the medium setting when the water mix equals 100

degrees. When the ground is warm, so is the cold water coming into your house or it is at least 30 degrees warmer than during winter. This means that getting 100 degrees during a warm water wash can be obtained by cutting down on the cold water line coming into the washer. Use a candy thermometer and get the water to as close as possible to 100 degrees and your clothes will come cleaner than ever before.

You only have a few days left with cool night time temperatures and maybe you should put that oven into self-clean cycle before it gets any warmer. Remember to use care and move things out of cupboards surrounding the kitchen range. That oven gets up to 1,000

degrees during self clean; enough to melt things and cause explosions of certain aerosol cans.

The older refrigerators have a plastic drain pan underneath, and is behind the front top plate. That pan is full of bacteria with a fan motor blowing those germs into your kitchen. Remove it and clean it with dishwasher soap and plenty of very hot water.

Joe Gagnon can be heard on WJR-AM 760 every Saturday and Sunday mornings. He is a past president of the Society of Consumer Professionals. His second book, "The Words and Wisdom of The Appliance Doctor" is available in book stores. His telephone number is (313) 873-8789.

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Got a remodeling project that has you beaming with pride? Let us know about it so we can share it with our readers.

Write up a short summary describing the project and submit it to Ken Abramczyk, At Home Editor, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or e-mail kabramczyk@oe.homecomm.net. If you have "before" and/or "after" photos, please include them as well.

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