
Subject: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Tue, 04 Oct 2022 02:23:17 GMT
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This seems to be a trend around this house. BTW we are all electric. The heat pump quit on a hot Sunday 4 years ago. The contactor exploded. Nothing left but a few scraps of plastic on the roof. Under warranty...Still a rather warm two days as I'm in Arizona. The stove conked out on the night before Thanksgiving three years ago and guests were due about 4PM the next day. Find one suitable, get the old one out and new one in and cook! The water heater conked out last year on a Saturday night. I had an important meeting on Monday AM. Cold shower yikes. This past Saturday late PM we discovered the refrigerator was not keeping stuff cold on one side. I tried everything in the manual...no go. I stuck my hand in the vent going from high side to the low side and found ice. Not good in a frost free unit. Tried to recycle the defrost...no go. I figured if it was broke then there was no harm in removing the inside panel. The entire area was all ice. Clearly there was no defrost happening. Manually thawed it out and turned it back on...Ok for the moment but I see some costly parts (like the control module) in the wind. Dubious if worth the cost as the box is a 20 year old Kenmore side by side. More to follow. I am beginning to worry about weekends and holidays. :roll:

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Rusty](#) on Tue, 04 Oct 2022 13:03:43 GMT
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There's someone called Murphy that's behind all this. I'm sure of it. I've had similar calamities. As a few years back on the coldest week of the winter, (sub zero), the furnace blower seized up. Way past warranty so grab your ankles time. Fortunately I have a fireplace insert wood stove that staved off the chill.

All these insurance plans for appliances and vehicle repair are fraught with fine print clauses. Making your time of need a double dose of aggravation.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Wed, 05 Oct 2022 02:48:29 GMT
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I forgot about Murphy...I was blaming it on ETs that slipped in at night though a worm hole. :lol:

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 05 Oct 2022 03:37:06 GMT
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What bugs me is how many parts are no longer available for some appliances.

Just a few short years ago, I could expect to find every part for all my appliances. I could keep

repairing them as long as I wanted.

But that's no longer true. I have an expensive combination stove / oven that I must replace only because one of the parts on the front door is no longer available. It still works, but is ugly because the front glass is cracked.

Same with my clothes washer. The top panel - immediately below the access door - is starting to rust. It is extremely easy to replace. But that part is no longer available.

If these were cheap little things that weren't made to be serviced, I could understand treating them as disposable assemblies. That's the way many things have gone. I hate that, but I do understand the sense in making an assembly so inexpensive it is best to treat it as a disposable part. But major systems that are clearly field-serviceable need to be supported by their manufacturers with repair parts.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Rusty](#) on Wed, 05 Oct 2022 16:57:16 GMT
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My mother used an old Maytag wringer washer for over 30 years probably. No way possible these days to get that kind of longevity out of a consumer appliance. I remember ads for Maytag with the heading, "My Maytag is a-workin' still". Before the lonesome repairman came on the scene.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 05 Oct 2022 17:01:37 GMT
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I remember that lonesome Maytag repairman!

Loved those commercials.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Thu, 06 Oct 2022 02:34:00 GMT
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We had a Maytag washer and dryer that lasted 40 years (bought used). The washer finally died. We replaced it with ones by LG and now have close to 12 years on them. No issues (knock on wood) to date. On the saga of the fridge...the parts were actually available. It is actually 18 years old and both parts cost just over \$100. Funny thing is no appliance shop had them or could (or was willing to) get them. Amazon had them and delivered them in one day. They might not be well liked, but they can be a life saver. Now to install them. If the parts do the job (quite likely)

then I saved at least \$200 for a service call and parts. Next in the failure que is the dishwasher. I already replaced that a few years back. This is the third one. I design my audio gear for a 50 year life span with the exception of the tubes, those I want 10K hours for power tubes and forever on small signal ones. My earliest tube designs are from 2008 (I did a lot of electronics before that, but not design) and to date have had only one tube fail. It was within about 10 hours of use....defective for sure. I still use the Blue Glass JJ KT88s that were in the very first amp. They test and sound fine. I used them in the recent build called the Cranberry for an article in Audio Express. The blue tubes on the reddish chassis with blue transformers looks sharp. 8)

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 06 Oct 2022 14:14:12 GMT

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I hear you, Bruce. I much prefer equipment designed and built to last for decades. All of my favorite gear lasts longer than a lifetime. That's how everything was built prior to WWII, and most stuff was built that way up through the 1970s. Most stuff made after that is built to last a few years only, and then discarded and replaced rather than repaired.

When I was young - in my first jobs, while still in school - electronics was still repaired at the component level, but there was a new trend of replacing a subassembly and sending the defective one to a depo that would repair it at the component level. I resisted that 'cause it seemed like "cheating," and almost always repaired things at a component level myself.

When I started my business, my main focus was to design custom communications and industrial control modules for customers like Walmart, Whirlpool and Fedex. But I also wrote service contracts with customers that owned Data General computer systems. I would purchase functional used systems and equipment for use as spares, and when customer equipment broke, I would replace an assembly in the field with spare equipment I owned, and then would bring it back to my office to repair. So I borrowed the depo approach, using it to save time at the customer site.

I can understand the depo approach, and repairing things at an assembly level in the field. I can even understand the economics of making an assembly so cheaply that it is discarded rather than repaired. I don't like that as much 'cause it nudges us closer to the "replaceable junk" mentality that we now seem to embrace. But it does make economic sense for the manufacturers. I just don't like it. It makes everything just plain cheap.

It changes how people treat their equipment too. When people make a purchase of durable equipment - something built to last - they tend to take care of it. But when they buy a disposable item, they tend to trash it.

I think it has even influenced our social mindset. I think it adds to the entitlement and narcissism that's kind of built-in to the culture these days.

So glad I grew up back in the 1960s.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Fri, 07 Oct 2022 01:35:24 GMT
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A bit OT but since I started it I think it is fine as it enlarges on the topic. We now have a culture of throw away gear and throw away people. Few seem to care if someone else gets hurt...as long as it isn't themselves. The "other guy" is expendable. :(

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Rusty](#) on Fri, 07 Oct 2022 15:27:40 GMT
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I've been thinking that a lot too down in the dungeon.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [gofar99](#) on Sat, 08 Oct 2022 02:16:42 GMT
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Well sort of good news. I figure that the fridge was toast anyhow :roll: so I opened it up and replaced the two parts.....it appears to be working properly now. A few days will tell. When I opened it the first time the exchanger was completely clogged with ice. Manually defrosted it. When I opened it today it was getting iced up again. New parts and the temp settings are now back to where they were months ago. Time will tell. I don't want to shell out what a new one costs. :roll:

EDIT: Hi Wayne..the spell checker is going bonkers on this one. Several screens of statements. Fortunately it didn't trash the post.

Subject: Re: Why do appliances fail at bad times
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sat, 08 Oct 2022 14:11:30 GMT
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Thumbs up and fingers crossed!
