

Freezer cold, fridge not so cold...

We have a refrigerator in our garage, so it has to deal with the cold of the winter as well as the warmth of the summer. This past week my wife told me the freezer was freezing but the fridge was room temperature. Since it was a relatively new appliance I was pretty sure it would be a quick fix. Many refrigerators run such that the freezer has all the coils and it just blows air into the refrigerator. The temperature of the refrigerator is adjusted by changing the air flow from freezer to fridge. In our case, the fridge had been accidentally opened for a period prior to this so it was pretty likely that the air flow was just blocked. I could have resolved this by just turning the unit off for several hours and letting everything defrost and dry out; but I wanted to get it done quickly, so here are the steps that I went through to do that...



Kenmore Model 253.6888

So, first the obvious...
Unplug the unit and remove all the food...

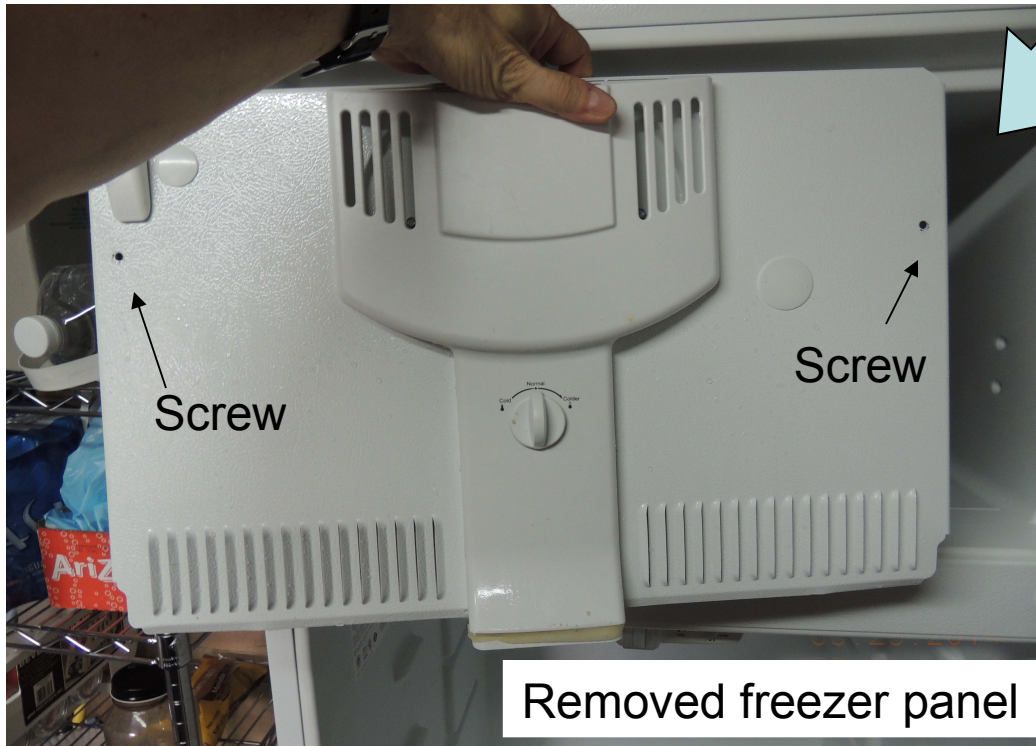


Probably a good time to clean the shelves and wipe down the walls. You gotta start to dry things out on the inside as well because you don't want to restart the unit with a lot of condensation on the interior that will just freeze up later.

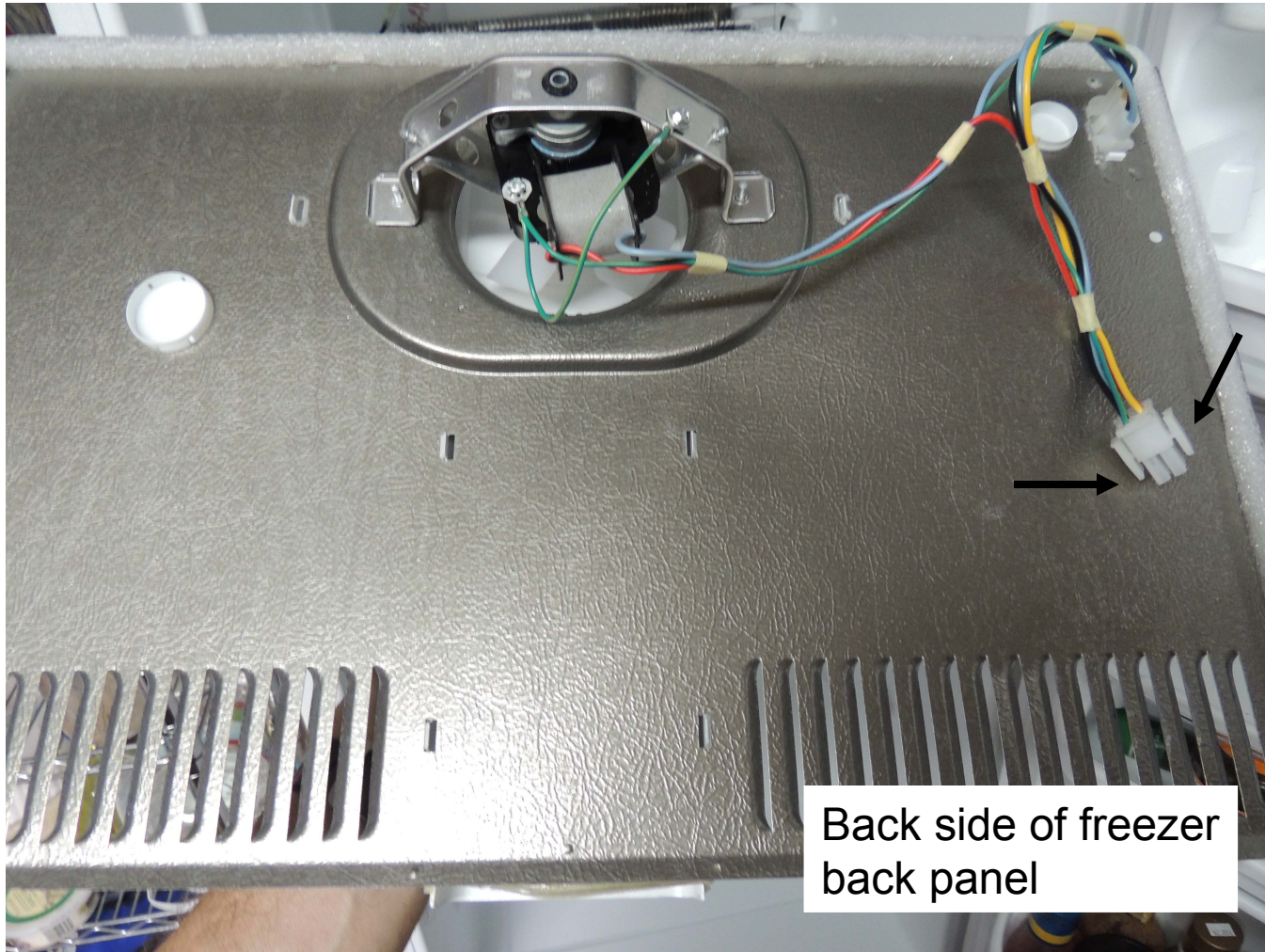


First remove the back panel of the freezer. Unfortunately, I forgot to take a picture of the “empty” but not yet disassembled unit, so the right picture shows the unit empty with the back panel of the freezer (below) removed.

I used a hex driver to remove the two screws, after which you can gently pull the panel out to the left slowly. Then you’ll unplug one 6-pin connector (next page) so that the panel can be removed.



The connector has two small squeeze points that allow you to release the grips and then pull (gently) it off the back of the inside of the freezer...



In almost every case I've ever encountered with these types of connectors, they are keyed so that you can't put them on wrong. Still, try to note how it comes off just in case!

Back side of freezer back panel

Next you want to remove the control panel from the refrigerator section.

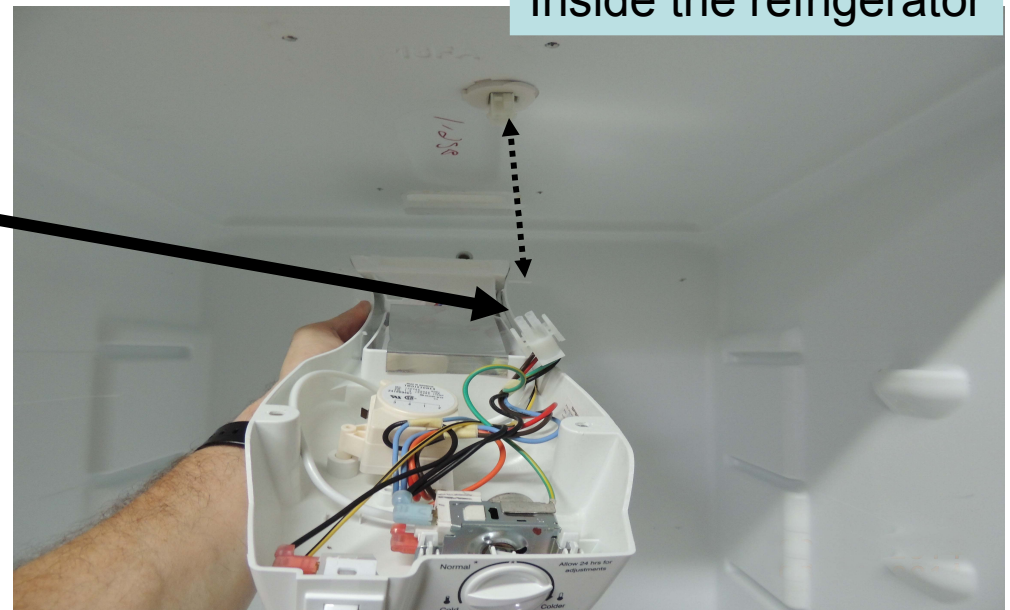
There are four screws holding this in place, again you'll need a hex driver. The arrows show the position of two on one side. The other two are in the same position on the other side.

Note, unlike my picture, you should have the food removed at this point (I did, but I forgot to take a picture!!!).

There is a similar “squeeze-to-disconnect” connector in this assembly as well.



Inside the refrigerator

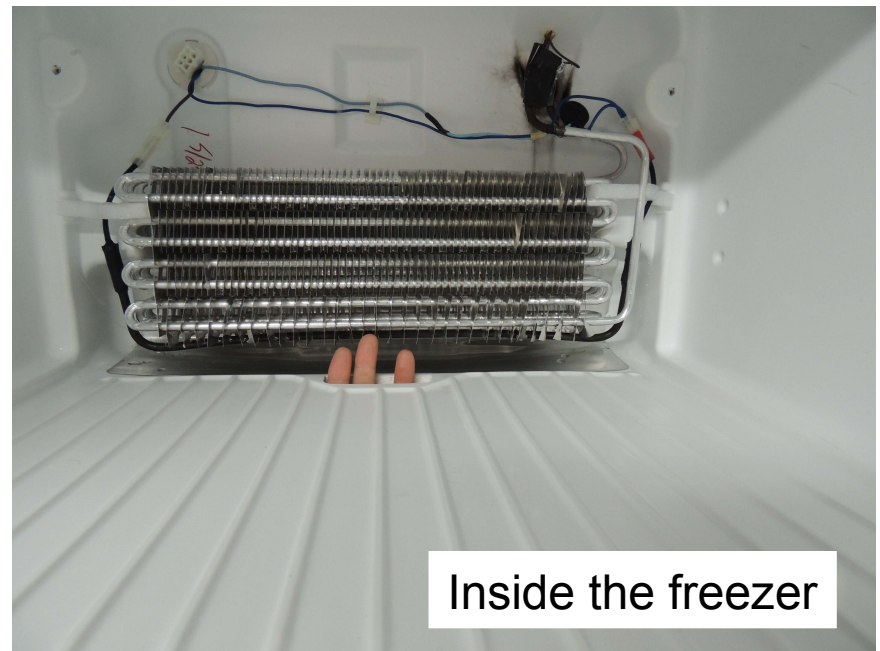


At this point, you should have both compartments empty, and you'll notice that there are no coils in the fridge, just the freezer. The refrigerator is kept cold with the fan (see previous picture) in the freezer that blow cold air through a hole (next page between the compartments.

Referring to the pictures to the right, notice the hole in each of the views showing my fingers.

There's actually a second hole behind the first one in the freezer and that allows condensation to drip off the coils and out the back of the unit into an evaporation tray.

For our purposes, we want to make sure the front hole is not clogged; however, generally speaking you wanna make sure they are both free flowing.



Once you've removed the ice from that hole, you'll also want to make sure that the path that the air takes through the back panel of the freezer is also cleared.

Notice in this picture that there is ice clogged up in that portion of the system as well.

The bottom line is this: you want to remove all water (frozen or melted) from the unit prior to restarting things; otherwise that water will just refreeze and re-clog.

Obviously be very careful with the coils in the back of the unit. Not sure what a pro would say about this, but I used my wife's blow drier on them just to remove the ice, then I gently dried them off.



Freezer cold, fridge not so cold...

That's it! If you're lucky! It could be a more serious problem; however always shoot for the easy fix first.

Just re-assemble remembering to reconnect each of the electrical connectors and the reinsert the 6 screws.

Hope this helped a few folks.

I've gained so much from other posts like this that I figured I'd do my own pay back when possible.