

What are you recalling and why?

The safety issue concerns the door lock system on certain washing machines. When the heating element in the washing machine is activated, in very rare cases a component in the door lock system can overheat, which, depending on product features, can pose a risk of fire. No serious injuries have been reported.

This issue was identified by Whirlpool's safety team, as part of the constant and rigorous monitoring of the quality and safety of all the company's products.

Whirlpool proactively notified the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) - the UK product safety regulator - of the situation and committed to conducting a nationwide product recall, which is now live. Whirlpool continues to cooperate fully with the OPSS through regular information updates.

Preparing for a recall of this scale is a complex operation and Whirlpool is working tirelessly to ensure it is ready to start offering replacements or repairs to our customers from January.

To do this, Whirlpool is:

- Doubling its call centre team to 800 customer service agents.
- Sharply increasing production at its five washing machine factories in the region to prioritise the manufacture of like-for-like replacement models.
- Increasing its engineer workforce to 1,100 and providing specialist training on the in-home modification.
- Engaging third-party logistics support to undertake collection of affected washing machines from people's homes and delivery and installation of replacement appliances.

We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience and concern this may cause to our customers, particularly over the Christmas period, but we hope people will understand that we are taking action because their safety is our top priority.

How many washing machines are affected?

Up to 519,000 washing machines sold in the UK may be affected and 11,000 in Ireland.

How can people find out if they own an affected machine?

People can check if their washing machine is affected by this recall by visiting <https://washingmachinerecall.whirlpool.co.uk> [<https://washingmachinerecall.whirlpool.ie> for Ireland].

This site includes an online model checker tool, as well as a full list of model numbers. Alternatively, customers can call our freephone hotline 0800 316 1442 [0818 903 281 for Ireland] where one of our advisers can assist with checking their model and providing further information.

To check if a washing machine is affected, customers will need both the model number and serial number of the appliance. Both of these codes can be found on the inside of the door, or alternatively on a label on the rear of the appliance. The website or our call centre agents will guide customers to where to find these labels and what information to provide.

Are affected washing machines still on sale?

We have ceased selling these products, and would expect very few of these appliances still to be in stock for sale from retailers.

We have advised all our trade partners about which models are affected and how to identify any remaining stock they may have, and have committed to collecting any remaining stock from them.

What should people do with their washing machine between now and when they receive a replacement?

We want to do everything we can to keep our customers safe.

That's why, to avoid all risk associated with the use of your machine, you should unplug your washing machine and stop using it.

We know washing machines are part of people's everyday lives, and we apologise sincerely for the inconvenience this will cause. Your safety is our top priority and must come first.

If nevertheless you do choose to use your appliance, you should only use cold water cycles of 20C or lower as this significantly reduces the risk. This is because the issue is associated with the washing machine's heating element being activated during washing cycles above 20C.

What are you offering affected customers?

Under the recall, all affected customers will have the choice of either a free-of-charge like-for-like replacement washing machine, or a free-of-charge in-home repair of their existing appliance.

If customers choose the replacement option, Whirlpool will collect and dispose of their affected washing machines and deliver their new products free-of-charge.

How long will it take to receive a replacement or repair?

At this stage, we are notifying customers about this potential risk because people's safety is our top priority. A product recall will begin in the New Year and we are working at full speed to be able to repair or replace all affected machines as soon as possible.

Why are you not offering refunds?

Whirlpool is responsible for either repairing the product, or removing affected appliances from people's homes and ensuring they do not enter the second hand market. Replacing or repairing the product is the most effective means of doing this.

Will you be contacting consumers directly?

Yes, we are writing directly to all customers for whom we have contact details to notify them about this potential safety issue. In addition, we will be keeping all customers regularly updated once they register their affected washing machines with us under the forthcoming recall.

How are you publicising this recall?

From January, Whirlpool will begin an expanded and far-reaching publicity campaign to raise awareness to the recall, which will include:

- Taking out full-page adverts in numerous national and regional newspapers as well as prominent advertising space in online news media, magazines and social media
- Running a national radio advertising campaign
- Contacting thousands of third-party organisations to spread the message - such as Fire and Rescue Services, local authorities, hospital and GP surgeries, charities, and safety organisations
- Issuing the recall notice via its online and social media channels
- Targeting vulnerable and hard-to-reach customers such as the elderly, disabled, and non-English speakers
- Writing directly to all registered owners of the affected appliances

Why did it take so long to alert customers to the risk?

At the time of our earnings report in October, the full nature and extent of the issue and which products are affected had not been identified. A reserve was established in case further investigations identified a need to take action.

This is a complex issue and it has required several weeks of rigorous analysis to confirm which models are affected and therefore which customers need to take action.

The manufacturing process means that not all machines of the same model have the same door lock system. Thorough analysis and testing had to be done to ensure we could accurately identify the specific appliances which pose this safety risk and avoid unnecessarily alarming millions of customers who are not affected.

Whirlpool proactively notified the UK product safety regulator of this potential issue and has remained in regular contact as the facts have been established. Whirlpool proposed and committed to conducting a nationwide product recall at the earliest opportunity.

We issued a public safety notice on the 17th December once we had completed our investigations and confirmed which products need to be recalled.

Do I need to keep my old appliance for you to collect when you deliver the replacement?

Our priority is to remove the risk from people's homes and ensure they do not enter the second hand market. That's why, as per our agreement with the UK regulator - the Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) - we must collect the affected unit in order to deliver a replacement.

If you have disposed of your affected appliance, we're not able to deliver a new one to you as part of this recall.