

Estates and Facilities Alert

Immediate Action

Ref: EFA/2011/001 Issued: 14 July 2011
Gateway Reference: 16384

Device

**Domestic type BEKO / LEC fridge freezers
(various colours)**



Problem

Recall of BEKO / LEC domestic type fridge freezers manufactured between January 2000 and October 2006, due to a faulty defrost timer switch.

Action

- Audit all sites and identify BEKO and LEC fridge freezers.
- Check for units listed in the recall. BEKO serial numbers begin 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 and 06; or refer to the Trading Standards website (see Contacts).
- Contact the manufacturer to arrange for repair.
- Risk assess, taking into account the possible effects of toxic smoke should a fire occur.
- If necessary, contact a local NHS Fire Safety Advisor.

Action by

- Managers responsible for departments which have this equipment in use.
- Managers and staff responsible for the procurement, supply, maintenance and asset management of fridge freezers.

Contact

BEKO freephone: 0800 009 4837
8.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday

LEC freephone: 0800 110 5728
8.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday

Website links on page 2.

Problem

1. A faulty defrost timer switch used in fridge freezers manufactured by BEKO between January 2000 and October 2006 (serial numbers beginning 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05 and 06) has been linked to a number of fires around the United Kingdom. A similar fault has been identified with an LEC model GDHA LEC TF2304W fridge freezer (in white). Up to 500,000 fridge freezers could be posing serious fire risks in homes, businesses and public facilities across the country.
2. Over the last three years the London Fire Brigade's investigation team has been working to establish a link between a faulty defrost timer switch and a number of house fires. If water gets into the switch, it can cause an electrical fault resulting in plastic components and highly flammable insulation inside the appliance catching fire and releasing toxic smoke.
3. It is understood that BEKO is contacting customers to fix the problem without charge. A BEKO spokesman said,

"We have contacted all retailers who sold these products to seek their help in identifying affected customers from their sales records. This has allowed us to mail these customers to make them aware of the issue and to urge them to contact our freephone number to arrange the modification. As a result of this ongoing activity we have mailed over 100,000 owners and have successfully located and modified 11,000 units."

Action

4. Checks should be carried out on domestic type fridge freezers to determine if they are manufactured by BEKO or LEC. An audit system should be set up to ensure all sites are checked, particularly where staff are able to order such equipment from their own budget.
5. Implicated models can be identified by checking on the Trading Standards website given below under Contacts, together with information on locating the identification label on the fridge freezer and the serial numbers of implicated units.
6. If any unit is identified as implicated in the recall, the manufacturer should be contacted to arrange for repair at no charge, although due to the numbers involved this may be delayed.
7. In the interim, a risk assessment should be carried out taking into account the significant amounts of toxic smoke which could result from a fire. NHS Fire Safety Advisors may be able to advise.

Suggested Onward Distribution

- Accommodation Services
- Catering
- General Practitioners (dental/medical)
- Risk Management
- Ambulance Services
- Estates/Facilities
- Health & Safety
- Stores
- Care Home Services
- Fire Safety Advisors
- PPI/PPP staff
- Supplies

Contacts

Trading Standards - general

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/index.cfm>

Trading Standards - BEKO

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/advice-recall-item.cfm?id=273199>

Trading Standards - LEC

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/advice-recall-item.cfm?id=273106>

Additional information for England

The above sections of this Alert were compiled by NHS Wales Shared Service Partnership - Facilities Services and distributed nationally without modification.

Action required by this alert should be **underway by: 3rd August 2011**

Action required by this alert should be **completed by: 31st August 2011**

Enquires should quote reference number EFA/2011/001 and be addressed to:

Defects & Failures

Department of Health
Estates & Facilities Division 3N09
Quarry House,
Quarry Hill,
Leeds LS2 7UE
Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk

HOW TO REPORT DEFECTS & FAILURES

Defects and failures relating to non-medical equipment, plant and buildings should be reported to the Department as soon as possible. Advice on what needs to be report can be found in DH (2008) 01. Defect and failure reporting is an on-line only reporting facility, available on the NHS Information Centre website at www.ic.nhs.uk

This Alert can be found on the following websites
<http://www.dh.gov.uk> and <https://www.cas.dh.gov.uk>

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