

Garbage Disposal Trouble Shooting

There are some basic steps that tenants need to perform as their responsibility to the garbage disposal. In addition, there are general rules for the use of disposals to avoid problems.

- 1) If the disposal does not spin or make any noise (no humming or vibration) then the built in disposal circuit breaker may have been tripped to protect the motor. On the bottom of the disposal in the cabinet is a small reset button. It is usually red, and about 1/4" square. Make sure the disposal switch is off first, then press the reset button on the bottom of the disposal. Turn on the disposal and see if the disposal turns. If the disposal turns then you should be good to go. If the disposal humms or vibrates, but does not spin, immediately turn off the switch, and proceed to step 2) if the disposal does not spin or hum, repeat step 1 again, and if no luck call Roberts and Sons to have the disposal checked.
- 2) If the disposal humms or vibrates, but does not spin, then something may be jammed inside the disposal. (small pebble, piece of glass, plastic, bottle cap or paperclip) . Turn off the disposal. On the bottom center of the disposal is a hex keyhole which will allow you to turn the disposal manually, forward and back, in an attempt to dislodge foreign objects. You will need a 1/4" hex wrench, or sometimes a screwdriver will suffice. Many homes have a S shaped disposal hex wrench that is left under the kitchen sink just for this purpose. It may be in the back of the cabinet, or attached to the side of the disposal. Any 1/4" hex wrench will work, and we have them at our office for tenants to keep at the home if they need one. Verify that the disposal is turned off. Insert the wrench into the center hole on the bottom of the disposal and turn it back and forth to spin the disposal. if you are able to get the disposal to spin freely, or move with a small amount with freedom, then (making sure the switch is off) look inside the top of the disposal with a flash light or feel inside with your fingers to see if there is something that needs to be removed. Once the disposal spins with the wrench and you can't find anymore things inside the disposal, you can turn on the water and the disposal. If you hear any noises or the disposal stops again, repeat steps 1 and 2 as necessary.
- 3) If you can not get the disposal to run freely with steps 1 and 2, then call to get the disposal checked. Keep in mind that foreign object fallings into the disposal are the tenants responsibility. If you perform steps 1 and 2 above and can not fix the disposal, the odds are the the disposal is bad and not the tenants responsibility, however there are times when objects falling into the disposal can not be removed, or require a professions to remove them, or cause permanent damage to the disposal. In these cases where Roberts and Sons arrives to find there are still foreign objects in the disposal, or these objects have caused the disposal to fail permanently, the tenant will be responsible for the service call and any material costs.

General Disposal use and guidelines :

Disposals should only be turned on after the faucet is running full blast into it, and the water should be allowed to run for 3 to 5 seconds after the disposal is shut off to remove food from the impeller blades. Not doing this can allow small pieces of food to accumulate on the impeller blades causing slower drainage and easier jams. In general, any food that is large enough for you to easily pick up with your hand should not be put down the disposal. This is especially true of starchy foods, and includes things like vegetable peelings, pasta, egg shells, and bread. If you can grab it out of the sink, then it should go into the trash or compost bin not the disposal.