

Safety Tips

Safety First – Recognize trouble before you are in trouble!

In your popcorn machine operations, there may be some difficulty that arises from failure to follow instructions – or eventually, old age – or from thermostat failure. What are these problems – what causes them – how can you eliminate serious problems from them?

In any series of popping – and it is always best to pop at least five batches of corn whenever you turn the kettle heat on – always turn the kettle heat off about midway through the final popping cycle – the corn is still popping rapidly – but there is plenty of heat left in the kettle to complete that popping – this is your responsibility.

What if you don't turn the heat off? You will get an objectionable smoky odor – this will hurt sales. But if you leave the heat on, your energy consumption is very expensive – the thermostat continues to open and close and can actually wear itself out.

Every time a heating element heats and cools, it loses some of its potential life.

Therefore, always make certain that your machine is on the proper voltage – or your Guarantee is void. Always make sure you dump the kettle promptly when a batch of popcorn is popped and reload it promptly – always make sure you turn the kettle “Off” before you finish the final batch in any series of poppings.

Failure to follow these instructions will void your Guarantee. Failure to follow these instructions will ruin the heating element or elements – or your thermostat or thermostats – or both.

How do you recognize a thermostat that is ruined? The heater stays open and you can't get any heat to the kettle. Or, it stays locked closed and you get too much heat to the kettle. Normally, a thermostat that is locked closed is actually “fused” closed at the contacts – this is always a product of “operator failure” – meaning, you do not load your kettle properly and promptly – you don't dump it promptly – or, you leave the heating elements turned on after you have finished all the popping cycles you intend to pop – or any combination of these three can ruin the thermostat.

It is strictly operator failure and Gold Medal assumes no liability for any damage to the machine that may result or damage to your place of business that may result from this type of operator negligence.

You can recognize this before you have problems: A normal popping cycle will take about two minutes thirty-five seconds to three minutes fifteen seconds with normal voltage input. If you get a faster popping cycle, you are getting too much heat to the kettle and your thermostat is inoperative.

If your popping cycle is one minute thirty-five seconds, up to two minutes and fifteen seconds or two minutes and thirty seconds, you are getting too much heat to the kettle – your thermostat is either out of adjustment or is fused closed. (Or someone has wired around the thermostat.)

You can also recognize the thermostats that have failed by corn which, when popped, does not expand out with the butterfly “ears” that you used to get when the machine was new – rather, it tends to form a coarse “ball” shape – and again, if you have been leaving your kettle on with no ingredients in the kettle – or if you are slow to dump the kettle when it is finished popping and slow to reload it, you are causing excess strain on the thermostat. You are shortening element life – and you may cause an excess heat build-up in the kettle, which may actually warp the kettle casting. So look for corn which, when popped, does not look right. Look for faster popping cycles than normal.

Thirdly, an excess smoky aroma during the popping cycle as opposed to a sweet buttery like aroma is an indication that you are not following proper popping instructions – or, by failure to follow proper popping instructions, your thermostat has been ruined – must be replaced immediately. Failure to do same will release Gold Medal Products Company and its dealers of any liability for further machine damage that may result, or any damage that may result to your place of business.

There is a delicate balance between the thermostat setting, the heat applied in the heating elements and the proper amount of oil and popcorn for each batch. If operator negligence might ruin the thermostat in your machine, be sure to look for the danger sign of a thermostat which is fused closed – seemingly, excess heat in the kettle – corn that is popped under too much heat and, therefore, does not expand properly – excess burned smoke aroma around the machine – and a popping cycle that is way too fast. Any one of these danger signs should be an “alert” – measure the others – do it promptly – or your place of business may burn down due to your own negligence.

In normal use, following proper popping instructions, you should be able to pop thousands of pounds of popcorn before “fair wear and tear” damages either thermostats or elements. Failure to follow instructions can ruin either within the first few months of operation – and this type of negligence is *not* covered under your Guarantee.

So, be alert – popcorn is still one of America’s best tasting snacks – one of the most effective snacks you can offer – one of the most profitable – and when you follow proper popping instructions, it will help your customers come back to you – yes, you can pop a truly gourmet quality popcorn with your Gold Medal Popper, Gold Medal’s Flavacol Special Seasoning Salt, a butter flavored coconut oil seasoning, and the highest possible quality of hybrid popping kernels – but make sure you store them under the proper conditions.

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