

CPSC Recalls – How to check recalls on your appliances and other household goods.

First, make a list of your appliances: refrigerator, dishwasher, water heater, range, washer, dryer, etc. Then write down the manufacturer name, the model number, and the serial number. With that information handy, you can then log on to the CPSC web site and check on recalls and safety concerns. Remember, though, that the very nature of numbers and letters means that numbers or letters might not have been read correctly. For example, the letter “O” and the number “0” can look the same, as can the letter “I” and the number “1.” Also remember to record spaces and dashes and any preprinted letters and numbers. It is possible to conduct research with only partial information, such as the manufacturer’s name and the type of appliance, but further evaluation might be required by a manufacturer’s representative or other specialist familiar with the equipment involved.



The CPSC web site is very easy to use and has an on-line subscription service for notification of any recalls or safety concerns. There are literally thousands of recalls and safety concerns that have been released since the Consumer Product Safety Commission began operating in 1973, and they all are listed. I recommend that you subscribe to all CPSC press releases. This will alert you to all recalls and safety concerns in all categories. Simply follow the steps below.

1. Connect your Internet browser to the CPSC web site: <http://www.cpsc.gov> and then click on “Recalls and Product Safety News.”
2. Up pops a new window, “Recalls and Product Safety News,” where you can find recent recalls or recalls by month and year, product type, company, product description, or product category, such as toys, household products, outdoor products, etc. Product type, for example, will show you all the dishwashers.
3. Let’s do it. Click on “Product Type.”
4. Up pops a screen “Find Recalled Products by Product Type.” Over at the right you’ll see “Optional.”
5. Let’s do a search on Kenmore dishwashers since I know there was a recall issued on February 25, 2005. In the “Optional” box, type the first three letters of dishwasher, “dis,” and click on “Simplify search.”
6. The left side of the window is refreshed to show you all the product types that include the three letters “dis.” There are four categories shown. Click on “Dishwashers” and then click on “Find.”
7. Up pops a window “Results of Your Search.” You should see twelve lines (as of 10/20/08); the tenth line is Kenmore. However, look at the date of the recall: February 15, 1993. Remember in Item #5 that I told you I knew there was a Kenmore recall on February 25, 2005? This is why I don’t use the “Product Type” category. In using the “Product Type” category, you will have to read all twelve of those dishwasher recall documents to make sure you haven’t missed any Kenmore

recalls. Kenmore currently is manufactured by Whirlpool corporation, so the fourth line (as of 10/20/08), “Whirlpool Corporation Recall of Dishwashers (February 25, 2005)” is the one we want.

8. Click on that line, and a new screen pops up, “NEWS from CPSC.” Scroll down and you’ll see that Whirlpool and Kenmore brands are involved. So you can see that if you just rely on headlines, your search could be faulty. Same thing with your local newspaper headlines. It’s important that you know that brand names are not necessarily manufacturer names.
9. Now click on your browser’s “back” button until you get back to the CPSC “Recalls and Product Safety News” page (probably four times), and I’ll show you a better way.
10. Now click on “Find Recalls by:” “Company.”
11. Up pops the “Find Recalled Products by Company” page.
12. Under “Optional”, type the first three letters of Kenmore, “ken,” click on “Simplify Search.”
13. The screen is refreshed to show you all the companies that include the three letters “ken” in their names.
14. Click on “Kenmore” and then click on “FIND”.
15. The screen is refreshed to show “Results of Your Search.” You should see 26 lines (as of 10/20/08) of products that Kenmore has recalled. Note that the headlines show “Kenmore” in only six of them yet you know that all 26 have the word “Kenmore” somewhere in the text of the recall notice. Therefore, just look for the ones that have “dishwasher” in the headline since you know that our search on “Kenmore,” coupled with “dishwasher” gives you what you want.
16. There are only four dishwasher headlines: May 16, 2007; February 25, 2005; May 29, 1996; and February 15, 1993. Now you can check your dishwasher’s model and serial numbers to see if it was involved in one of the recalls.
17. Now, to complete our task, let’s go back to the CPSC home page. Clicking your browser’s back button a few times might take you back, but sometimes it doesn’t from this page. If it doesn’t, simply enter www.cpsc.gov again in your browser address bar.
18. Now click on “Sign Up for Email Announcements.”
19. Type your email address in the box.
20. There are many subscription choices, including subscribing to recalls involving only selected products, e.g., infant/child products, sports and recreation products, outdoor products, household products, and specialty products. I recommend subscribing to “All CPSC press releases, including recalls (list name: releases),” which is the second choice. By subscribing to all press releases, you’ll get not only recall notices but great safety information, too. You’ll never miss anything, regardless of how insignificant it might seem and regardless of whether or not the recall makes the evening news or the pages of your local newspaper. Impress your family, friends, and business associates by knowing about recalls and safety concerns.
21. Now click on “subscribe” and you’re done. As long as your email address is active, you’ll never miss a recall or safety concern notice, and you’ll get many of them well before you hear about them on the evening news or read about them in the next day’s paper.
22. Lastly, go back and check on your own appliances from that list you made at the very beginning.

If you have any questions about anything, feel free to [Contact Us](#).