



# Have You Heard?

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Lancaster Extension Home Economist

### After-The-Sale Services Important

Smart consumers look for much more than just the color, shape and brand of the major appliances they buy. They also evaluate the services that come with the appliance because they know that after-the-sale support represents the manufacturer's commitment to its product and its customer.

Manufacturers note that strong warranties top the consumer's list of important features when buying a new appliance. A full warranty means the manufacturer covers

both parts and labor during the first year of ownership. In addition, some companies also offer additional warranties on major components (such as refrigerator compressors and microwave oven magnetrons) with relatively high parts costs. Before you buy such a warranty, review it carefully and check to see that it will be honored anywhere in the United States. One other thing to check: Be sure that service and parts are readily available in your local area.

The quality of after-the-sale services can make the difference

between satisfaction or frustration with a major appliance. For example, look for a use and care guide that is well-illustrated and easy to understand. Also check to see if the manufacturer offers a do-it-yourself repair manual for your appliance. A well-illustrated step-by-step repair manual can help you take care of simple repairs and save you both time and money.

A toll-free telephone number is another after-the-sale service that is designed to help appliance owners. Eight hundred numbers offer quick contact with the manufacturer, immediate answers to questions and quick resolution of problems. For example, one leading manufacturer's toll-free telephone service responded to about 700,000 customer calls last year. Eight hundred numbers have been offered by appliance manufacturers for over 20 years.

Eight hundred service calls really run the gamut! Some people think of toll-free numbers as complaint lines, but less than 6% of calls come from unhappy custom-

ers. Most callers ask questions about proper use and care of new appliances, want product literature or product manuals, or ask for the nearest service location. Some ask for do-it-yourself information and others call just to say they like a product.

When calling a toll-free customer assistance line with a product-related question, be sure to have the model and serial number on hand so that the consultant can quickly identify your specific model.

### Microwaving Dairy Foods

Is yours one of the three out of four households that are riding the "wave" of the future? The microwave that is. Microwaving is today's answer to today's busy world. This time-saving convenience lets the busiest person enjoy the right foods in delicious meals. Nutritious, calcium-rich dairy foods lend themselves perfectly to

microwaving.

Here are some microwave tips for dairy foods. Use them to bring more calcium and other nutrients, protein, vitamin D and riboflavin, that dairy products supply to your diet:

For quick nachos, place 2 cups tortilla chips in a microwave-safe plate. Top with 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese and 2 table-spoons taco sauce. Microwave on medium (50% power) until melted, 1 to 2 minutes.

To scald milk, microwave 1 cup milk on medium in a 2-cup glass measure for 2½ to 4 minutes or on high (100% power) for 1½ to 2½ minutes. To avoid a boil-over, watch milk as it approaches the minimum cooking time.

To soften an 8-ounce package of cream cheese, remove wrapper and place on wax paper. Microwave on low (10% power) for 30 seconds to 1 minute.

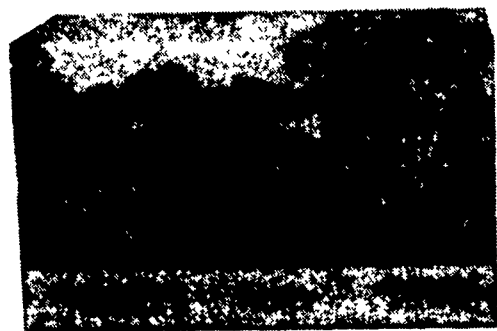
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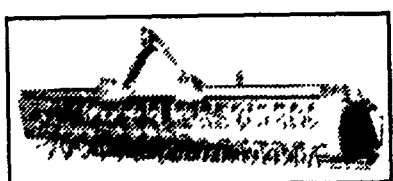
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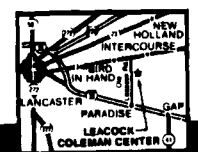
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