

Refrigerator, freezer stock impacted by COVID-19

CORONAVIRUS

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Posted: Sep 16, 2020 / 07:38 PM HST / Updated: Sep 16, 2020 / 07:38 PM HST

HONOLULU (KHON2) — Looking to buy a refrigerator but can't find any? Appliance stores tell us the pandemic has caused a shortage, with some people having to wait at least a month to get one. The General Manager of Disco Mart in Waipahu tells us if she does not have refrigerators in stock, the average wait time is about 10 to 12 weeks.

When you head into an appliance store, you may have noticed many refrigerators have been sold. The shortage is impacting stores large and small. When Marge Funasaki at Disco Mart called Whirlpool about the issue, she was told a plant closed down temporarily because there was a positive case.

“Now they're practicing social distancing, which has decreased the production. Example given to me was a normal factory might produce one model 100 a day, but now it's only 60,” said Funasaki.

Mike Allwer, the owner of Discount Store Appliance, tells us he is also experiencing a shortage of refrigerators and freezers because of factory shutdowns.

“And the second reason would be some parts coming from China. I guess they're not shipping enough,” he said.

Allwer said he started noticing the shortages around June. It doesn't help that summer is also a time when the demand for new refrigerators is high.

“Refrigerators is an item that seems to go out during the summer months. It works extra hard and it begins to show its age,” said Funasaki.

When it comes to freezers, Funasaki has a wait list of about 40 to 50 customers.

“I no longer take names anymore. We're expecting another shipment and they're all been pre-sold,” she said. “We will try our best. Sometimes we don't have it. We make every effort to find something for you.”