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ISS  
NASA

## **ISS Toilet Broken. Astronauts Have Nowhere to 'Go'**

*Discovery expected to arrive on Monday with spare parts*

The only toilet on board the International Space Station allegedly broke last week while in use, when the motor fan suddenly stopped, leaving astronauts with no other option than to use the toilet on board the Soyuz-TMA-12 capsule. The problem is that this particular toilet has limited capacity. Luckily, rescue is at hand, since the space shuttle Discovery is set to launch into space on Saturday, in order to deliver the second section of the massive Japanese space laboratory, Kibo. However, until Discovery reaches the International Space Station next week, the crew will just have to make use of an improvised device connected to the broken toilet in order to urinate. According to NASA, the fan whose motor broke last week is a critical component used by the toilet to gather the liquid waste. It is now functioning only intermittently, while the solid waste gathering system still appears to work properly. The Russian officials - the toilet is of Russian provenience - reported that they had no clue as to what might have been the problem, nor did they have any advice to how to fix it. "Like any home anywhere the importance of having a working bathroom is obvious", said NASA's spokesman, Allard Beutel. The same toilet has been in service for the last seven years and was broken just once in the past, but for a short period of time only, said Nicole Cloutier from NASA's Johnson Space Center. Meanwhile, the space shuttle Discovery is scheduled to arrive to the ISS on Monday. The replacement parts for the broken toilet will arrive to Cape Canaveral in the next days and will be loaded into the bay of the shuttle to be flown into space. The situation is somehow unusual, Cloutier added, since the weight of the shuttle's payload was carefully calculated and balanced. The second section of the Kibo laboratory alone weighs 14,545.5 kilograms and occupies most of the bay. In fact some of the sensors on the shuttle's robotic arm had to be removed just to make room for the massive load.