

Space station to move to avoid oncoming junk

January 13 2012

(AP) -- The International Space Station is dodging a softball-sized piece of space junk.

Mission Control told astronauts to fire the station's engines briefly Friday morning to avoid a piece of an old communications satellite.

It will be only the 13th time since 1998 that the station has moved because of debris. Debris travels at such high speed in orbit that it could cause a deadly puncture to the space station.

The last time the station moved was in September. In June, astronauts had to take shelter in the Soyuz escape capsule as debris flew by.

NASA said Thursday that the debris from the private U.S. satellite Iridium was on a path that would have brought it close to the station Friday afternoon, possibly less than a mile.
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pages/station/living/index.html

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