

The EPA's Updated Refrigerant Management Requirements

What Refrigerant Distributors and Wholesalers Need to Know



What are the Section 608 regulations?

Section 608 of the Clean Air Act prohibits the knowing release of refrigerant during the maintenance, service, repair, or disposal of air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment. The EPA requires proper refrigerant management practices by those who buy or sell refrigerant, owners and operators of refrigeration and air-conditioning systems, technicians, and others.

What's changing in these regulations?

In the fall of 2016, the EPA updated the existing requirements related to ozone-depleting substances (ODS), such as CFCs and HCFCs, and extended them to substitutes such as HFCs.¹ The updates include:

- More stringent requirements for repairing leaks in larger appliances;
- New recordkeeping for the disposal of appliances containing five to 50 pounds of refrigerant;
- New reporting requirement that kicks in when larger appliances leak 125% or more of their charge in a calendar year;
- Restricting the sale of HFC refrigerant to technicians certified under Sections 608 or 609 of the Clean Air Act; and
- Changes to improve readability and simplify compliance.

In addition to protecting the ozone layer, the EPA estimates that the updated requirements will decrease annual greenhouse gas emissions by **7.3 million MTCO₂e**—that's equivalent to taking 1.5 million cars off the road per year.

How will the new requirements affect refrigerant distributors and wholesalers?

Refrigerant distributors and wholesalers will need to comply with the revised provisions.² Changes to the existing regulations are underlined.

Starting **January 1, 2017**, refrigerant distributors and wholesalers must:

- Not sell or distribute any CFCs, HCFCs, or substitutes consisting of used refrigerant unless it: has been reclaimed by a certified reclaimer; is being transferred to equipment belonging to the same owner; or was used only in a motor vehicle air conditioning (MVAC) or MVAC-like appliance and was recycled.³

Starting **January 1, 2018**, refrigerant distributors and wholesalers must:

- Only sell or distribute refrigerants containing CFCs, HCFCs, or HFCs to technicians certified under Sections 608 or 609 of the Clean Air Act.
 - The EPA is allowing the continued sale of small cans (under two pounds) of R-134a to DIY-ers for use in MVAC systems. Cans must be equipped with a self-sealing valve.

¹ These regulations do not extend to substitutes that have been exempted from the venting prohibition, such as ammonia.

² This fact sheet highlights select changes that may be of most interest to this community. Please see the regulations for the full changes/requirements.

³ This does not apply to the sale of used refrigerant for reclamation or destruction because that refrigerant is not being sold distributed, or offered for sale or distribution for use as refrigerant.

- Keep invoices that indicate the name of the purchaser, sale date, and the quantity of CFC, HCFC, and substitute refrigerant purchased, unless they are selling exempt substitutes or small cans of MVAC refrigerant equipped with self-sealing valves.
- Keep documentation verifying that a purchaser is, or employs, a certified technician for three years.

Additional Resources

Update to the Refrigerant Management Requirements Final Rule:

www.epa.gov/section608/revised-section-608-refrigerant-management-regulations

The EPA's Section 608 Webpage: www.epa.gov/section608

Refrigerant Sales Restriction: www.epa.gov/section608/refrigerant-sales-restriction

Greenhouse Gas Reporting for the Import and Export of HFC Refrigerants:

www.epa.gov/section608/greenhouse-gas-reporting-requirements-related-stationary-refrigeration-and-air

The EPA Stratospheric Ozone Contact: spdcomment@epa.gov



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