

Legislative Update and Strategies for HCFC Phase Out

Cool Energy are providing further advice to customers regarding the banning and phase-out of the HCFC refrigeration gas R22 under EU legislation.

Russell Wilson, Cool Energy Rentals Director explains, "We are advising customers to take a good look at their refrigeration systems, process chillers, air conditioning and cooling equipment on site to identify if they still operate equipment with this gas inside.



Cool Energy's Rental Director Russell Wilson

Most equipment has a label or plate on the outside providing the specification of the equipment and CE registration. If this is not present, then each compressor contained within the equipment will have this identification.

For engineers and our trade partners who are having to manage the disruption of replacing their equipment with newer gases, Cool Energy can provide equipment on a temporary basis to help minimise downtime on site during a changeover of equipment or retrofit."

Latest News

We have now received further information from the EC giving us up to date news on how we should manage this within our business. It states:

The EC Ozone Regulation has been recast and the new Regulation (EC/1005/2009) provides the legislative framework for EU Member States to meet their obligations under the Montreal Protocol, the international agreement drawn up to halt damage to the ozone layer.



The most harmful ozone-depleting substances (e.g. CFCs like R12) were banned in the 1990s. New equipment using less harmful "transitional" HCFC refrigerants like R22 was banned in 2001 (or 2004 for small air-conditioning systems). From the end of 2009 the use of virgin HCFCs to service and maintain existing refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) equipment is banned in all EC Member States. The two key phase-out dates are:

♦ **From 1st January 2010** it is illegal to use virgin HCFCs to service RAC equipment. Only reclaimed and recycled HCFCs may be used. Supplies of recycled or reclaimed HCFCs might be very limited and very expensive. Note, this ban applies even if HCFC refrigerant was purchased before the ban date. It is illegal to use stockpiles of virgin HCFCs after the end of 2009, any stockpiled HCFCs should be returned to fluid suppliers for appropriate disposal.

♦ **From 1st January 2015** it will be illegal to use any HCFCs to service RAC equipment – so recycled or reclaimed HCFC may not longer be used.

The ban on the use of virgin HCFC gases represents a very real business threat to any company which uses refrigerants like R22 or R408A in their processes or air conditioning systems. R22 remains one of the most commonly used refrigerants in the UK so many organisations are going to be affected by the ban. Sectors at greatest risk include the food and drink industry, petro-chemicals, pharmaceuticals, health, retail, hospitality, finance and data-processing. Typical applications can vary widely, but examples

include refrigeration systems in supermarkets, blast chillers, cold stores and process coolers and many types of building air-conditioning as well as in transport refrigeration. Many of these applications are absolutely critical to the continued operation of their owner's business.



Cool Energy 250kW rental chiller supplied during the retrofit of an R22 Chiller.

It should be noted that the bans described above refer to the "use" of HCFCs. This specifically means use for servicing and maintenance. It will remain legal to continue using RAC equipment containing HCFCs beyond the phase-out dates providing they do not require maintenance that involves putting any HCFCs back into a system.

Given that most RAC systems leak to a certain degree, all current users of HCFC systems must develop a plan to manage their operations without virgin gas. Doing nothing is not a sustainable option. Given the serious implications and potential costs, businesses should follow a strategic approach.

The new Regulation came into force on 1st January 2010 and slightly changes the rules for continuing use of HCFCs in RAC systems.

What to do

There are 3 main options for customers:

1. Replace existing equipment with new, more-energy-efficient equipment. Cool Energy can help.
2. Keep existing equipment and retrofit the refrigeration circuits with an alternative refrigerant.
3. Keep existing equipment operating on recycled R22 up to the EU illegal deadline.

Special Note:

- The price of R22 gas is likely to escalate when production and stocks become scarce.
- Over the past 3 years, the cost of R22 has risen 5 fold.

How Cool Energy can help you

We have experience in managing the phase-out of R22 within the industry and can help in the following manner:

- Come to site and help identify what R22 equipment is currently on site.
- Help provide a contingency plan in case of breakdown or changeover, so that the site is fully prepared.
- Provide a rental chiller or cooling plant during any maintenance, change out or refurbishment of R22 equipment, to ensure a smooth transition.

Why change now?

"We understand that any change can be costly and that is why we are providing this information now.

By planning ahead and making these changes, customers will be able to meet the changes in the law governing R22 and help reduce your operational costs by making sure that these changes are managed properly and in time," explained Wilson.

[Call us on our regional numbers to ask for more information and to plan for one of our engineers to visit.](#)

