

HCFC Phase-out

Regulation EC/1005/2009

December 2014

Important information for operators of equipment containing HCFCs - including R22

Since 01 January 2010 it has been illegal to use virgin HCFCs to service refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) equipment.

NEW: From 01 January 2015 it will be illegal to use any HCFCs to service RAC equipment. This includes the use of recycled and reclaimed HCFCs.

What is changing

It has previously been legal to use recycled and reclaimed HCFCs to service RAC equipment. From **01 January 2015** this will no longer be the case. It will be illegal and an offence to use any HCFC gas to top-up or maintain RAC equipment. The most commonly used gas that is included in this ban is HCFC-22, often known as R22.

Existing equipment that contains HCFCs can legally continue to be operated after 01 January 2015, but you cannot add additional HCFC gas to the system to maintain its function.

What you need to do

You must act now to ensure that any business-critical systems are prepared for the phase-out. From 01 January 2015 these systems will need to be able to operate with alternatives to HCFC. Please ask your RAC contractor for advice on alternatives available that best suit your system.

To enable them - and you - to make the best decision, the following information will be useful:

- System type
- Equipment age
- Condition of the equipment
- Meeting current requirements and future restrictions under the F-gas Regulations
- Energy efficiency
- Availability of alternative gases

Additional obligations

The ODS legislation also includes further existing obligations for the operators of HCFC systems:

1. Undertakings shall take all precautionary measures practicable to prevent and minimise any leakages and emissions of controlled substances.

2. Undertakings operating stationary RAC systems containing HCFCs must ensure that leak checks are carried-out at the following frequencies:
 - Equipment containing 3kg or more must be checked for leakage at least once every 12 months; this shall not apply to equipment with hermetically sealed systems, which are labelled as such and contain less than 6kg of HCFC;
 - Equipment containing 30kg or more must be checked for leakage at least once every 6 months;
 - Equipment containing 300kg or more must be checked for leakage at least once every 3 months;

Any detected leakage must be repaired as soon as possible and in any event within 14 days.

The equipment or system shall be checked for leakage within one month after a leak has been repaired to ensure that the repair has been effective.

3. Undertakings operating stationary RAC systems with a HCFC charge of 3kg or more shall maintain records on the quantity and type of HCFC added and recovered during servicing, maintenance and final disposal of the equipment. They shall also maintain records of other relevant information including the identification of the company or technician who performed the servicing or maintenance, as well as the dates and results of the leakage checks carried out. These records shall be made available on request to the competent authority and to the Commission.
4. The EU Ozone Regulation allows Member States to define the minimum qualification requirements for the personnel carrying out the above activities.

Currently the following qualifications are valid to work on equipment containing HCFCs in Great Britain:

- **City and Guilds 2078** (HCFC only)
- **City and Guilds 2079 - a Category I or II qualification** (HCFC and HFC)
- **Construction Skills J01** (HCFC and HFC)
- **Construction Skills J11** (HCFC and HFC)
- **Construction Skills J12** (HCFC and HFC)

Further information

Updated guidance relating to the new F-gas legislation will shortly be available on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding the HCFC phase-out, please contact the Environment Agency F-gas Helpdesk:

Email: f-gassupport@environment-agency.gov.uk

Telephone: 03708 506 506 and ask to speak to Christopher Summers or Richard Troup

customer service line
03708 506 506

incident hotline
0800 80 70 60

floodline
0345 988 1188
0845 988 1188

www.gov.uk/environment-agency