

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Refrigerant Management Program

What is the Refrigerant Management Program?

The Refrigerant Management Program requires specific best management practices to reduce emissions of refrigerant from non-residential refrigeration systems. The regulation includes provisions similar to current federal and local regulations for ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and extends requirements to ODS refrigerants substitutes.

Why was the Refrigerant Management Program created?

- Addresses the problem of high leak rates from stationary, non-residential refrigeration.
- By using the program's best management practices, businesses can reduce their emissions of Chlorofluorocarbon (CFC), Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC), and Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants, which are highly potent greenhouse gases (typically thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO₂).)
- It is a board approved AB 32 Early Action Measure developed to help meet the goals of reducing CA greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Who must comply with the regulation?

The regulation affects any owner or operator of a facility with a stationary, non-residential refrigeration system using more than 50 pounds of a high-global warming potential (GWP) refrigerant. The threshold of more than 50 pounds of high-GWP refrigerant is based on the single refrigeration system with the largest refrigerant charge. It is not the cumulative refrigerant charge from all refrigeration systems, at a facility.

The regulation also affects any person who services any appliance using a high-GWP refrigerant or distributes or reclaims a high-GWP refrigerant.

What types of businesses have refrigeration systems with more than 50 pounds of high-GWP refrigerant?

Businesses that generally have refrigeration systems with more than 50 pounds of high-GWP refrigerant include: supermarkets and grocery stores, food and beverage processors, cold storage warehouses, and industrial process cooling. Businesses that generally do not have these types of refrigeration systems include: bars and restaurants, gas stations, liquor stores, bakeries, and office buildings.

How can a business determine the refrigerant charge of their refrigeration system?

A business can determine the refrigerant charge of their refrigeration system(s) by contacting the manufacturer or their refrigeration system service provider.

What is a high-global warming potential refrigerant?

High-global warming potential, or high-GWP, refrigerants include CFC, HCFC, and HFC refrigerants. Refrigerants that are not high-GWP include ammonia and carbon dioxide (CO₂).

What are the estimated emission reductions of the regulation?

The regulation is estimated to reduce high-GWP refrigerant emissions by 8 million metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO₂E). This reduction has an equivalent climate impact of removing 1.4 million cars and light trucks from the road each year.

What are the estimated costs?

On average, the regulation results in a cost savings of \$2 per metric tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂E) in emissions reduced. The cost savings are a direct result of reduced consumption of refrigerant through the use of best management practices.

What does the proposed regulation require?

The regulation requires facility registration, leak detection and monitoring, leak repair, retrofit or retirement, and recordkeeping for any person who owns or operates a facility with a stationary, non-residential refrigeration system using more than 50 pounds of a high-GWP refrigerant. Reporting and payment of an implementation fee is required for any person who owns or operates a facility with a stationary system using 200 pounds or more of a high-GWP refrigerant. Required service practices apply to any person who services an appliance using a high-GWP refrigerant. Reporting and recordkeeping requirements also apply to distributors, wholesalers, and reclaimers of high-GWP refrigerants.

When does the regulation take effect?

The regulation has requirements that are phased in over time depending on the largest refrigeration system used at a facility.

Refrigeration systems are categorized as:

- **Large:** refrigeration systems using 2,000 pounds or more of a high-GWP refrigerant
 - Systems typically used in cold storage warehouses, manufacturing, and some supermarkets
- **Medium:** refrigeration systems using 200 pounds or more, but less than 2,000 pounds, of a high-GWP refrigerant
 - Systems typically used in smaller warehouses and many supermarkets
- **Small:** refrigeration systems using more than 50 pounds, but less than 200 pounds, of a high-GWP refrigerant
 - Systems typically used in some pharmacies and grocery stores

The following requirements for facilities using applicable refrigeration systems, refrigerant distributors and refrigerant reclaimers will apply on the effective date of the regulation (January 1, 2011):

- Required Service Practices applicable to the service of any high-GWP appliance
- Leak detection, monitoring, and recordkeeping
- Retrofit or retirement plans
- Refrigerant distributor, wholesaler, and reclaimer prohibitions

Refrigerant distributor, wholesaler, and reclaimer annual reporting requirements will become effective in 2012. Requirements for facilities using applicable refrigeration systems that are phased in include:

- Facility registration: Large in 2012, Medium in 2014, Small in 2016.
- Annual implementation Fee: Paid upon initial registration for operation and annual renewals - Large (\$370) and Medium (\$170). There is no fee for small.
- Annual Facility reporting: Large beginning in 2012 and Medium beginning in 2014. No reporting is required for Small.

How will the Refrigerant Management Program be enforced?

- Air districts may adopt a rule of equivalent emission reduction benefit under local authority.
- Air districts may enforce statewide regulation under agreements with the ARB with funding provided through fees paid by facilities subject to the regulation.

Where can I find more information about the regulation?

For the regulation and accompanying documents see: www.arb.ca.gov/cc/reftrack/reftrack.htm
For updates on the rulemaking process see: www.arb.ca.gov/regact/2009/gwprmp09/gwprmp09.htm
For further information contact: Mr. Satpana Buthken, sbuthken@arb.ca.gov, (916) 327-8532 or Pamela Gupta, pgupta@arb.ca.gov, (916) 327-0604.

To obtain this document in an alternative format or language please contact the ARB's Helpline at (800) 242-4450 or at helpline@arb.ca.gov. TTY/TDD/ Speech to Speech users may dial 711 for the California Relay Service.