

R-22 Refrigerant Phaseout

Questions and Answers



As of January 1, 2020, production and importation of the refrigerant R-22 was ended in the U.S. by provisions of the Clean Air Act designed to phase out refrigerants with ozone depleting potential by 2030.

According to one estimate, there were 60-70 million systems in the U.S. operating with R-22 refrigerant as of 2017. With such significant use in refrigeration and HVAC applications, immediately replacing or converting every system to alternate refrigerants is infeasible.



Please review the questions and answers below as you consider how to proceed with equipment currently operating with R-22 refrigerant.

Do EPA Regulations Now Forbid the Use or Storage of R-22?

No. This phaseout does not disallow existing R-22 inventories or the use of R-22 in systems currently operating with R-22. It's important to note that reclaimed R-22 is also allowed, so some supplies of R-22 from retrofits and refrigerant conversions will be available to service existing equipment.

How Will R-22's Limited Availability Impact Price?

R-22 will continue to be available only from existing inventories or in recycled form. High demand and the factors listed below may increase the price of R-22 by 300%. Market factors include:

- Shortage of DOT39 cylinders
- 200%-300% increased duties on imported HFC refrigerant blends and components for equipment that use HFCs
- Manufacturer price increases
- 300%-400% increase in freight costs

It's also important to note that impending EPA regulations allocating HFC production and important rights in 2022 will create additional uncertainty in the refrigerant market.

What Option Is Best for My Business?

Building owners and facility managers have three options to consider:

- Maintain for now, and then retrofit or replace
- Retrofit to use alternate refrigerants
- Replace equipment

A good preventative maintenance program can extend the useful life of R-22 in your system, for instance, by finding and repairing small leaks. To evaluate the life expectancy of a system's current R-22 supply, Linc Service experts can analyze current system conditions and efficiency ratings, so that you have all the information you need to decide when retrofits or replacements best fit your business strategy.

