

FACT SHEET

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking - Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Update to the Refrigerant Management Requirements under Section 608 of the Clean Air Act (Tier 3; SAN 5820; RIN 2060-AS51)

This proposed rule would more fully implement the prohibition under section 608 of the Clean Air Act against knowingly venting, releasing or disposing of ozone-depleting and substitute refrigerants. It would accomplish this by updating the existing requirements under section 608 that currently apply to ozone-depleting (ODS) refrigerants and then extending, as appropriate, the requirements to non-ozone-depleting substitute refrigerants, such as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), as amended.

EPA is proposing numerous changes to the National Recycling and Emission Reduction Program. Some of these changes are intended to strengthen the existing program, in particular by requiring a number of industry best practices. Others are intended to extend, as appropriate, the regulations to HFCs and other substitutes for ODS. Still other changes are meant to improve the effectiveness of the regulations. The major regulatory changes proposed are:

- 1) Lowering the leak rate threshold above which owner/operators of refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment normally containing 50+ lbs. of refrigerant must repair leaks:
 - lower from 35% to 20% for industrial process refrigeration (IPR) and commercial refrigeration equipment
 - lower from 15% to 10% for comfort cooling equipment
- 2) Requiring regular leak inspections or continuous monitoring devices for ref/AC systems:
 - annual inspections for systems normally containing 50+ lbs. of refrigerant
 - quarterly inspections for commercial refrigeration and IPR systems normally containing 500+ lbs. of refrigerant
- 3) Prohibiting operation of systems normally containing 50+ lbs. of refrigerant that have leaked 75% or more of their full charge for two consecutive years.
- 4) Allowing the purchase of cans containing two pounds or less of non-ODS refrigerant for motor vehicle air conditioner (MVAC) servicing without technician certification so long as the small cans have a self-sealing valve to reduce refrigerant releases.
- 5) Requiring technicians to keep a record of refrigerant recovered during system disposal from systems with a charge size from 5–50 lbs.
- 6) Extending the requirements of the Refrigerant Management Program to cover substitute refrigerants, such as HFCs. Note that some substitutes have already been exempted from the section 608 venting prohibition as provided for under section 608 in previous EPA rules; such substitutes would also be exempted from the requirements under this proposed rule.