

New refrigerants and what it means to the consumer

What Does the R-22 Phase-out Mean for Consumers?

Availability of R-22

The Clean Air Act does not allow any refrigerant to be vented into the atmosphere during installation, service, or retirement of equipment. Therefore, R-22 must be recovered and recycled (for reuse in the same system), reclaimed (reprocessed to the same purity levels as new R-22), or destroyed. After 2020, the servicing of R-22-based systems will rely on recycled refrigerants. It is expected that reclamation and recycling will ensure that existing supplies of R-22 will last longer and be available to service a greater number of systems. As noted above, chemical manufacturers will be able to produce R-22 for use in new A/C equipment until 2010, and they can continue production of R-22 until 2020 for use in servicing that equipment. Given this schedule, the transition away from R-22 to the use of ozone-friendly refrigerants should be smooth. *For the next 20 years or more, R-22 should continue to be available for all systems that require R-22 for servicing.*