

CUTTING COSTS + DECREASING GHG EMISSIONS

Reducing Refrigerant Emissions is a Real Win-Win

The Benefits

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), the most deployed refrigerants today, are the fastest growing greenhouse gas (GHG) globally. Acting on refrigerants is one of the most overlooked ways to reduce GHG emissions and holds significant benefits for organizations that act now. These refrigerants are used in refrigeration, air-conditioning, and heat pump (RACHP) technologies, and can be thousands of times more powerful than carbon dioxide at causing climate change when leaked to the atmosphere. And all refrigerant-containing equipment leaks over its lifetime.

Taking a proactive approach to reducing emissions of HFC refrigerants can yield big benefits to organizations, including:

- **Cutting costs:** New EPA regulations designed to lower GHG emissions from refrigerants will significantly decrease the supply of HFCs beginning in 2024. As such, the cost of refrigerants that contain HFCs will climb over the life of equipment that uses them, making it more expensive to service leaky HFC-containing equipment.
- **Achieving emissions reductions targets:** Equipment purchasing decisions made today will impact the organization's refrigerant-related emissions for the lifetime of the equipment, which in nearly all instances will stretch beyond an organization's 2030 to 2040 net zero targets. As organizations reduce and eliminate GHG emissions from other parts of their operations, these remaining refrigerant emissions will make up an ever larger portion of total emissions.
- **Exceeding regulatory requirements:** Purchasing RACHP equipment that uses, for example, natural refrigerants not only mitigates the concern for reducing and tracking emissions, but also ensures compliance with the EPA "technology transition" rules going into effect beginning in January 2025.

Tools exist to reduce refrigerant emissions, including life cycle refrigerant management frameworks, leak detection technologies, higher quality tubing and piping, and equipment that utilizes natural refrigerants.

Resources

The Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council has put together a growing suite of resources that can assist your organization in unlocking the benefits of adopting an effective refrigerant emissions reduction policy and setting a target for refrigerant emissions reductions. These include:

Public Resources

- SPLC's Climate Friendly Refrigerants Action Team produced [technical guidance and procurement-specific recommendations](#) on refrigerants in 2020. The document, updated in 2021, identifies opportunities and specific procurement options 1) to avoid high GWP HFC refrigerants when purchasing new energy efficient refrigeration and air conditioning equipment, and 2) to reduce refrigerant leakage and service emissions.

SPLC Member Resources

- SPLC's Webinar [Climate Friendly Refrigerants: The Role of Procurement](#). Learn more about the importance of taking action to address the climate impacts of refrigerants, explore a new toolkit available to support purchasers in taking action, and hear how an institutional purchaser is integrating the new procurement recommendation into their contracts for refrigerant-containing equipment.
- SPLC's Webinar [Refrigerants: The Overlooked Behemoth of Climate Solutions](#). This webinar is designed to help you understand the significance of refrigerants and how to use this crucial lever to combat the climate crisis, promote sustainable cooling and heating technologies, and reduce your carbon footprint.

For more information, visit:
www.sustainablepurchasing.org/guidance.

