FINAL COUNTDOWN TO F-GAS IMPLEMENTATION:

3 MONTHS AND A LOT LEFT TO DO

Brussels, 8 April 2009 – **National governments only have 3 months left to act in order to ensure that the F-gas Regulation starts working in practice. According to the information gathered by the European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE), only 15 Member States will meet their obligations before the Commission's deadline.**

EU Member States must ensure that by 4 July 2009, only companies with duly certified technicians can purchase Fluorinated-gases for refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump installations. This restriction is a critical component of measures introduced by the Regulation to ensure reduced emissions of F-gases.

In order to have a better overview of the implementation status of the F-gas Regulation across the EU, EPEE undertook a survey with the authorities of the 27 Member States. Out of the 20 Member States who shared information with us, only 8 will have a certification scheme up and running as of 4 July 2009. An additional 7 countries have committed to introducing interim certification systems ahead of the deadline, pending the introduction of their final scheme.

The European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE) firmly believes that containment and responsible use are the most appropriate measures to prevent potential F-gas leakage from cooling and heating installations.

This is why EPEE is urging governments to make sure that proper administrative procedures are in place and in good time, such that reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are not hindered or delayed.

Keeping buildings like hospitals and offices heated or cooled, our food fresh and frozen - all require technologies which, through their superior energy efficiency characteristics and ability to exploit renewable energy sources, greatly assist the EU in meeting its CO2 emission targets. Choosing technologies containing HFC refrigerants, which are Fluorinated greenhouse gases, may be most viable as long as particular attention is paid to the prevention of refrigerant leakage, as set out in the F-Gas Regulation.

End.

For further information, please contact:
Darcy Nicolle – (+32) 2 739 49 01
Friedrich Busch – (+49) 51 42 17 42
E-mail: secretariat@epeeglobal.org / Website: www.epeeglobal.org

Notes to the Editor:

EPEE - The Voice of the Heating, Cooling and Refrigeration Industry in Europe

The European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE) is composed of members who produce, design and install heating, cooling and refrigeration technologies.

EPEE's mission is to promote a better understanding of our industry in the EU and to contribute to the development of effective European policies to reduce the environmental impact of our products.

Background to the F-gas Regulation

The F-gas Regulation (842/2006/EC) was published in the Official Journal in June 2006 and entered into force on 4 July 2007.

The Regulation and the subsequently adopted implementation measures feature strict requirements for the containment of F-gases and the personnel handling them, such as detailed leak check procedures, labeling provisions, and high standards for the training and certification of staff. The Regulation is foreseen to be reviewed in four or five years' time.

For more information, please refer to EPEE's Frequently Asked Questions document on the F-gas Regulation, which is available on our website www.epeeglobal.org.

What are Fluorinated gases?

The fluorinated industrial gases (Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), Perfluorinated Carbons (PFCs) and Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF_6)) are widely used in daily-life applications such as refrigerators, air conditioning, thermal insulation and medical sprays. The gases are fluorinated to confer on them distinct environmental and safety benefits (non-ozone depleting, low toxicity and low flammability) for every-day use.

However, the high Global Warming Potential (GWP) of these gases has raised environmental concerns and the three gases were therefore included in the basket of six greenhouse gases identified in the Kyoto Protocol, together with carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O).

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a family of industrial fluorinated gases. They are non-flammable, energy efficient, recyclable and have a very low toxicity. HFCs are used as a replacement for ozone depleting substance such as CFC and HCFCs. They do not deplete the ozone layer because they contain no chlorine.

Why are HFCs used in refrigeration and air-conditioning?

HFCs are widely used as a refrigerant because of their safety, energy efficiency and low toxicity which make them suitable for use in a range of applications. As compared to the existing alternatives, they offer – depending on the application – energy efficiency, which counterbalances their higher global warming potential. In addition, other refrigerants have specific characteristics that constrain their use, such as ammonia which is highly toxic and is mainly used in large out-of-

EPEE
14A, rue du Luxembourg, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel : +32-2 732 70 40 / Fax : +32-2 732 71 76
E-Mail : Secretariat@epeeglobal.org / www.epeeglobal.org

town cold stores; or hydrocarbons such as propane which are very flammable and are used only in small amounts in products like household fridges.

Who is affected by the F-gas Regulation?

The domestic and commercial refrigeration and air-conditioning sector, food retailing sector, health care sector, the car industry (manufacturers and part suppliers), international transport industry, semiconductor industry, electrical grid operators, the fire fighting industry, the magnesium smelters, aerosols manufacturers and the building construction sector.

Is there a perfect refrigerant?

The perfect refrigerant does not exist. To choose the best refrigeration, users must balance the different properties of each refrigerant. The major factors are health, safety, environmental requirements, energy efficiency as well as economic and technical feasibility. The optimum choice of refrigerant may therefore vary case by case.

Relevant links:

Link to EPEE Factsheet “Handling refrigerants responsibly”
Link to EPEE videos on the balanced benefits on refrigerants, promotion of energy efficiency and facts about HFCs
Link to the F-Gas Regulation Online Observatory (Figaroo) F-Gas logbook

EPEE
14A, rue du Luxembourg, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel : +32-2 732 70 40 / Fax : +32-2 732 71 76
E-Mail : Secretariat@epeeglobal.org / www.epeeglobal.org