

FINAL COUNTDOWN TO F-GAS IMPLEMENTATION: 1 MONTH LEFT AND 23 MEMBER STATES CLEARLY ON TRACK

Brussels, 4 June 2009

One month before the final deadline for the implementation of the F-gas Regulation, [EPEE](#) estimates that 23 Member States have taken the necessary steps to allow industry to comply with the EU F-gas Regulation. EPEE hopes that the remaining countries will soon have their rules implemented as well.

By 4 July 2009, EU Member States must ensure that 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 the measures introduced by the Regulation to ensure both reduced emissions and [responsible management of F-gases](#).

In order to have a better overview of the implementation status of the F-gas Regulation across the EU, EPEE has undertaken a survey with the authorities of the twenty-seven Member States. Out of the twenty-three Member States who responded to us, twenty are already compliant with the Regulation and three are confident they will have the necessary rules in place by 4 July 2009. This marks good progress since our previous [survey](#) in April which could only confirm that fifteen Member States would be complying with the Regulation.

EPEE wants the F-gas to work and this needs clear and transparent implementation in all 27 Member States. EPEE is therefore urging governments to make sure that proper administrative measures are in place and in good time, so that reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are not hindered or delayed.

Keeping buildings like hospitals & offices heated or cooled and 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 reduction targets. However, air conditioning, heat pump and refrigeration technologies can contain refrigerants like HFCs which are Fluorinated greenhouse gases and require particular attention to the prevention of leakage, as set out in the F-Gas Regulation.

End.

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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 (SF₆)) 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 (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O).

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-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](#)