

01 July 2019

EFCTC Whistle-Blowing Line on Illegal HFCs Nears 100 Reports

The EFCTC “Action Line” has already received nearly 100 reports of possible illegal trade in HFCs since its opening three months ago.

As part of its efforts to accelerate the adoption of lower global warming potential refrigerants, the EU established the F-gas Regulation to facilitate the phase-down of HFCs. This has led to a significant quantity of illegal HFCs being imported into the EU.

“These reports provide important details on potentially illegal trades that would otherwise go unnoticed and unreported,” stated EFCTC Chair, Nick Campbell. “Many of the illegal products are being sold online so we urge online platforms to take down adverts and sites that offer illegal HFCs. This poses a risk to the achievement of the EU’s environmental goals and creates a safety risk in the supply chain and to refrigerant contractors.”

The reports and the sources of information received on the Action Line will remain confidential and are analysed by an independent consultancy financed by EFCTC. Where appropriate, the details, including names and quantities will be shared by them with EU agencies such as the anti-fraud unit OLAF and relevant Member State authorities. Member States and the European Commission are already taking action against the illegal trade of HFCs. Customs Agencies, in particular, have, and are making, preparations to stop such shipments and some have already been seized.

In order to encourage further reports and drive momentum, the EFCTC Action Line has been revised and simplified to aid reporting. It is now available in several languages including German, Italian, and Polish, with additional languages to be added based on demand from members. Individuals, companies and associations who believe that they have identified illegal trade in HFCs should report it using the following link: <https://efctc.integrityline.org/>

The European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee is a Cefic Sector Group that monitors legislation related to HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons), and HFOs (hydrofluoro-olefins) in the EU and at global level. Fluorocarbons are used as feedstock, as refrigerants, as solvents and as blowing agents for insulation plastic foams.

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