



**STOP SMUGGLING.
START TRACING.**



Over one thousand illegal HFC cylinders seized in port of Rotterdam

Dutch customs and environmental enforcement authorities and OLAF have recently stopped a large shipment of 1,150 illegal HFC cylinders in the port of Rotterdam only a few days after EFCTC [released](#) new data showing that the black market of illegal HFCs could be up to one third of the legal market. This seizure proves that illegal trade in HFCs is thriving across Europe.

The shipment came from China and had been transported by truck from the port of Hamburg to the port of Rotterdam. The final destination would have been Lithuania. It contained 1,150 cylinders of R134a, R32 and R404A and R410a, adding up to 28,073 tonnes in CO₂ equivalent. This is comparable to the annual emissions of more than 20,000 mid-sized cars in Europe. All the cylinders were non-refillables, the import of which is illegal in Europe.

Commenting on the seizure, Tim Vink, Vice-Chair of the European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee (EFCTC) and Director of Regulatory Affairs at Honeywell, said:

“As a result of the excellent work done by OLAF and local enforcement agencies, this big batch of illegal HFCs was prevented from entering the black market. This new real-life evidence coupled with our [recent data analysis](#) shows that organised crime is still profiteering from the lack of enforcement. It also shows that national authorities are stepping up their enforcement activities. EFCTC is fighting against illegal HFCs, in close collaboration with the private investigator Kroll, OLAF and local enforcement agencies. Anyone spotting suspicious activity can signal it through the EFCTC [Action Line](#) and remain anonymous.”

He added, “One key action that authorities can implement readily is the ban of the supply of HFCs in non-refillable cylinders, as most of the illegal trade is happening through non-refillables, often via e-commerce platforms. The other urgent action is to tighten the rules on transit shipments of all environmentally sensitive goods, including HFCs.”

The F-gas Regulation binds industry to progressively reduce the GWP impact of HFCs through a quota system. As the EU is moving towards a further quota reduction in 2021, there is an urgent need for better enforcement. The black market in HFCs undermines EU climate goals, funds organized crime and negatively impacts European businesses across the supply chain.



Image source: <https://www.ilent.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/07/01/ilt-onderschept-grote-lading-wegwercilinders-met-f-gassen>

About EFCTC | The European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee is a sector group of the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic) and represents the companies Arkema, Chemours, Daikin Chemical, Honeywell and Koura. Its main objectives are to provide up to date information about applications, safety, health and environmental effects for HFCs (hydrofluorocarbons), HFOs (hydrofluoro-olefins), and the relevant European and international legislation.

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