



BMPs

Best Management Practices for N.H. Solid Waste Facilities

Refrigerants

Refrigerants, such as R-12 (Freon) and R-134a, found in certain appliances and automobiles are harmful to Earth's atmosphere if released to the air. Freon belongs to a group of chemicals known as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs rise into the upper atmosphere where they destroy the ozone layer that protects Earth from high-energy ultraviolet radiation. Increased exposure to this radiation raises the risk of skin cancer and damages plants and animals. R-134a belongs to a group of chemicals known as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and is also known as a "greenhouse gas" because it contributes to global climate change.

One of the largest single uses of Freon is as a refrigerant in air conditioners, refrigerators and freezers. By the end of 1995, manufacturing of new Freon was no longer permitted. However, Freon can still be used until supplies are depleted. Newer appliances use other refrigerants, such as R-134a.

It is illegal to vent any refrigerant to the atmosphere and it is important to manage refrigerants in a way that protects the environment. Before refrigerant containing appliances and other items are disposed of, the refrigerants must be removed by trained and certified technicians using equipment meeting standards established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Recovered refrigerants have value and can be sold to certified reclamation facilities. Until the refrigerant is shipped to a reclamation facility, it must be stored properly.

Did You Know?

- Skin cancer is one of the fastest growing forms of cancer. In the US, one person dies of skin cancer every hour.
- Freon can only be sold to certified technicians or to certified reclamation facilities that will reclaim it to its original purity specifications.
- R-12 (Freon) is also known as CFC-12. R-134a is also known as HFC-134a.

Best Management Practices for Refrigerants

- Do not vent refrigerants to the atmosphere.
- Designate a place at your facility where appliances and other items that may contain refrigerants can be stored temporarily while waiting to have the refrigerants removed.
- Assume all such items still contain refrigerant when they first arrive at your facility, unless the item is so damaged it is obvious the refrigerant has been released already.
- Take care to prevent refrigerant-containing items from being damaged while waiting to be evacuated. For example, keep the items upright on a level surface out of the path of snowplows and other traffic and avoid stacking them.
- Have the refrigerant removed from each item by trained and certified technicians using EPA approved recycling/recovery equipment only.
- Write "EVACUATED" or put an "X" or other distinguishing mark on each refrigerator, air conditioning unit and other items after the items are fully evacuated.
- Send recovered refrigerant to an EPA-approved reclamation facility.
- Keep all refrigerant reclamation records for three years. Include volume and final destination in records of off-site reclamation.

- If your facility performs its own refrigerant removal using its own equipment, certify to EPA that you are using equipment that meets EPA standards. To obtain the appropriate certification form, call the EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline (1-800-296-1996) or visit the EPA website at www.epa.gov.
- If you hire a contractor to remove the refrigerant, keep records to show you have complied with the law that requires refrigerants to be removed by certified technicians using approved equipment only.
- For more information about managing refrigerants, call the EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline (1-800-296-1996).



The appliances are not marked as to whether they have been evacuated. Stockpiling makes it difficult to tell which appliances may contain refrigerants and creates a physical hazard.



These appliances are clearly marked to show the refrigerants have been evacuated. The appliances are stored upright and are easily accessible.



You can hire mobile contractors to remove refrigerants. The contractors travel from site to site performing this service. Make sure they are certified and have approved equipment.

For additional information, contact:
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