

## COUNTDOWN TO THE F GAS REGULATIONS

### What needs to be done and when?

The European Union's F-gas Regulation No 842/2006 became law on 4 July 2006 and many of the requirements came into force on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007 however, some of these requirements are still awaiting clarification from the Commission. The table below helps to outline what you need to do now.

F-gases include all HFC refrigerants, such as R134a, and blends containing F Gases such as R407C, R410A, R404A. If you are handling, recovering, supplying, installing, manufacturing or own equipment containing HFC refrigerants in stationary equipment you now have new legal obligations under the F Gas Regulations.

F Gas Requirement	When does this come in?	How should this be done?	When will further guidance be available?
Operators of equipment must <b>prevent leakage</b> , ensure leak checks are carried out and repair any leaks as soon as possible as well as arranging proper refrigerant recovery	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only by qualified personnel (current requirement is City &amp; Guilds 2078 or CITB)</li> <li>• Following a standard leak check procedure to be set by the Commission</li> </ul>	<p>The UK is consulting now (including possible penalties) and this is likely to be in force from October 2007</p> <p><a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/f-gas/index.htm">http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/f-gas/index.htm</a></p> <p>Qualifications and leak checking procedures are expected from the Commission in September</p>
<p>Operators must ensure systems are <b>checked for leaks</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least annually if more than 3kg charge (hermetically sealed more than 6kg)</li> <li>• At least once every six months if over 30kg. If they have an automatic leakage detection system they need only be checked every 12 months.</li> <li>• Automatic leakage detection systems must be installed on applications with 300 kg or more, and these systems should be checked every 6 months.</li> <li>• If a leak is detected and repaired, a further check must be carried out on the repair site within up to one month to ensure that the repair has been effective.</li> </ul>	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only by personnel qualified to the levels set by the Commission</li> <li>• Following a standard leak check procedure.</li> </ul>	<p>The Commission is likely to decide on the standard leak checking procedure and a minimum requirement for training for leak checking in September.</p> <p>Confirmation of the frequency of inspections can be found in existing DTI guidance on the f gas website at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/fgases/page28889.html">http://www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/fgases/page28889.html</a></p>

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<p>Operators must <b>maintain records of refrigerant</b> in equipment with a charge of 3kg or more (if hermetic, 6kg or more). Records to be made available to the competent authority on demand.</p> <p>Relevant information specifically identifying the separate stationary equipment of applications containing more than 30kg of F Gas must be maintained by the operator.</p>	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	<p>System records should contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantity and type of F-gases installed, added or recovered</li> <li>• Name of company or technician carrying out servicing</li> <li>• Dates and results of leakage checks and rectification work carried out.</li> </ul>	<p>A suggested standard format is available from the DTI in its supplementary guidance at <a href="http://www.dti.gov.uk/files/file34176.pdf">http://www.dti.gov.uk/files/file34176.pdf</a></p>
<p>Personnel involved in installation, maintenance, servicing, containment, and recovery activities must <b>obtain existing UK qualifications</b></p>	By 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	<p>Obtain existing qualifications in refrigerant handling C&amp;G 2078 or CITB equivalent</p>	<p>Currently under DEFRA consultation, with penalties likely to be in force from October 2007 <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/f-gas/index.htm">http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/f-gas/index.htm</a></p>
<p>Personnel involved in above work must obtain EU recognised F Gas certification which may be different to the existing UK qualifications</p>	From 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2008	<p>The Commission is currently consulting and should announce its decision in October.</p>	<p>If these requirements do not match the existing UK qualifications there is likely to be a phase in period from July 2008 over a number of years and operatives will need to undergo further training.</p>
<p><b>New equipment will need to be labelled.</b> Most new equipment will be labelled by the manufacturer, but site assembled equipment will need to be labelled by the installer with, amongst other things, the total installed charge. Certain equipment will need instruction manuals containing information about the F Gas in use.</p>	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007 - however this will not apply until 6 months after the specification for the label requirements has been agreed.	<p>The Commission is likely to decide on the label format/contents</p>	<p>The requirement will apply some time after the specification is agreed by the Commission, possibly up to 9 months. Clarification is awaited in October.</p>
<p><b>Companies to be certified</b> under the F Gas Regulation</p>	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2008	<p>Likely to take the format of a register of companies who employ certified personnel</p>	<p>The Commission will be finalising requirements in October. UK Government will then consult on the details of the register to be introduced in the UK.</p>
<p><b>EU sales of non-refillable containers</b> and non-confined direct evaporation systems are prohibited.</p>	From 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2007	<p>Equipment cannot be first placed on the market after 4<sup>th</sup> July 2007</p>	<p>First placing on the market might be wholesaler selling to retailer, so it is likely that some disposables filled before 4<sup>th</sup> July will still be available for a while after this date. A clarification note from the Commission is expected in October.</p>
<p>Companies involved with containment and recovery will only be able to <b>take delivery of F gases</b> if they have appropriately certificated personnel.</p>	From 4 July 2009	<p>DEFRA will consult on appropriate methods of implementation in due course.</p>	

## **Some useful definitions**

**The Operator** - The DEFRA initial guidance on the regulation states that "the operator is defined in Article 2. It is the natural or legal person who exercises actual power over the technical functioning of the equipment and systems. Therefore the key consideration when identifying the operator will be the way in which responsibilities for managing equipment are arranged, who exercises actual power over its functioning and what actual power means in practice. In most circumstances, it is likely to be that the person who as actual power will be the person or legal person (typically a company) responsible for giving instructions to its employees as to the day to day technical functioning of the equipment."

**Hermetically sealed equipment** - The DEFRA supplementary guidance for owners of stationary refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump equipment defines this as follows: a system in which all refrigerant containing parts are made tight by welding, brazing or a similar permanent connection which may include capped valves and capped service ports that allow proper repair or disposal and which have a tested leakage rate of less than 3 grams per year under a pressure of at least a quarter of the maximum allowable pressure.

**Leakage detection system** - This means a calibrated mechanical, electrical or electronic device for detecting leakage of fluorinated greenhouse gases, which, on detection, alerts the operator.

**HCFCs** – Ozone depleting refrigerants such as R22 are not covered under the F Gas Regulations. Users and handlers of HCFC refrigerants must comply with the Ozone Depleting Substances Regulation.

## **Further information**

You can download up to date Guidance, a copy of the Regulation and the recent Consultation on penalties and enforcement at

[www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/fgases/page28889.html](http://www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/fgases/page28889.html).

Or

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/fgas/index.htm>

ACRIB will issue updates as information becomes available from the Commission at [www.acrib.org.uk](http://www.acrib.org.uk)

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