



## **Purchasing Virgin or Reclaimed Refrigerant**

### **A Refron Q&A Guide**

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As the nation's largest refrigerants wholesaler, we receive many questions from our customers about reclaimed vs. new product. Which should I buy? Is there a difference?

This guide was designed to answer some of the most common questions customers ask about this topic. If you have any further questions, simply call us at 1-800-4-REFRON.

And whether you decide to buy reclaimed or virgin refrigerant, you can rest assured that Refron is unsurpassed in the quality of our product. And our service.

#### ***I need to buy CFC refrigerants for immediate use. Should I buy reclaimed or virgin product?***

Most people prefer to purchase virgin refrigerant for their service requirements, in manufacturer-branded and manufacturer-filled cylinders. The refrigerant manufacturers provide brand name recognition and assurances of excellent purity and quality control, which are extremely important when purchasing refrigerants. A few individuals or companies prefer to purchase specifically reclaimed refrigerant, usually as a way of demonstrating their company's commitment to protecting the environment and supporting recycling activities in general.

#### ***Is all reclaimed refrigerant the same?***

No. By law, all used refrigerant that is sold must be reclaimed and certified to the ARI-700 standard for refrigerant purity. However, because refrigerant reclamation is a very exacting process, much of the refrigerant that is labeled as reclaimed nevertheless falls short of this standard. You must rely upon the integrity and reputation of the reclaimer. At Refron, all of our reclaimed refrigerant is certified three times, first by our own analytical laboratory, then by an outside independent laboratory, and again by ARI's Certification Program for Reclaimed Refrigerants. We stand 100% behind the quality of our product.

#### ***Could there be any problem with reclaimed refrigerant that meets ARI-700?***

Definitely. ARI-700 does not explicitly address or exclude contaminants that are not usually found in refrigerants. Depending upon its boiling point, ARI-700 would allow an unusual contaminant to be present in concentrations from 100 parts per million and up to 0.5 percent. Some of the contaminants (i.e. hydrocarbons, toxic gases), that we have found in reclaimed refrigerant that met ARI-700 were substances that could have caused significant damage over time to the seals and gaskets in an HVAC system, or could have resulted in physical harm to persons in the event of a leak. Our company carefully screens for and rejects such refrigerant. Many other reclaimers do not.

***How can I tell if the reclaimed refrigerant I purchase is pure?***

Not easily. Since refrigerants and contaminants are often colorless and odorless, the end user frequently will not be able to detect a problem until it's too late. Proper screening requires laboratory analytical equipment and precise testing procedures.

***Is reclaimed refrigerant cheaper than virgin?***

Not necessarily. As explained, properly reclaimed refrigerant is identical to virgin refrigerant in purity and specification. Our reclaimed refrigerant undergoes even more extensive testing and stringent quality control procedures than virgin product normally receives. Most reputable reclaimers price their virgin and reclaimed refrigerants the same. You may want to be wary of the quality of reclaimed product offered at a discount.

***I plan to purchase CFC refrigerants to stock up for future use. Should I buy virgin or reclaimed refrigerant?***

That depends. You probably know that Federal CFC Floor Stocks Tax applies to virgin CFC refrigerants held for resale on January 1st of each year in quantities of 400 lbs or more. (Beginning January 1996 the tax is \$.45 per lb per ODU.) Therefore, you can certainly buy virgin refrigerant if you are an end user (i.e. the refrigerant is being purchased for your own company's use and systems), or if you stock less than 400 lbs, or if you use or dispose of the refrigerant in excess of 399 lbs prior to December 31st of the purchase year. If any of these conditions apply, the virgin CFC refrigerant you hold on January 1st will be exempt from Federal CFC Floor Stocks Tax. Otherwise, you may want to consider purchasing reclaimed refrigerants, which are not subject to this tax.

***I intend to deposit CFC refrigerants into your refrigerant banking program. Should I deposit virgin or reclaimed refrigerant?***

The same considerations would apply as in the previous question. Refrigerants held in our bank for your account are your refrigerants, and are subject to or exempt from the Floor Stocks Tax as though they were at your facility

***I have previously deposited reclaimed refrigerants into the refrigerant bank. When I go to withdraw it, should I withdraw reclaimed or virgin refrigerant?***

Withdrawing virgin refrigerant in exchange for the reclaimed refrigerant you have on deposit will save you money on shipping costs, as described in our banking program literature. Since both the reclaimed refrigerant you own in our bank and the virgin refrigerant we carry in our inventories have the same market value, we can make this exchange for you easily and at no cost to you.

***I've got a question that you haven't answered yet. What should I do?***

Do what everyone else does. Call us, at **1-800-4-REFRON**, and we'll be glad to help you further.