



FOR ALL YOUR
REFRIGERANT NEEDS

The Refron Reporter™

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An insider's view on the refrigerants industry

REFRIGERANT SMUGGLING IN THE NEWS

On January 9, 1997 the U.S. Attorney General announced indictments against over a dozen individuals for various cases of illegally smuggling CFC refrigerants into the United States. The charges involved a total of over 1.5 million lbs., and included companies and individuals in Florida, Pennsylvania, Texas and California. In a related case U.S. customs seized a \$1 million payment that was being made to purchase refrigerant smuggled in from Mexico. The Attorney General warned anyone buying refrigerant to beware; if the price looks too good to be true it probably is.

R-12 REFRIGERANT FRAUD IS A NEW INDUSTRY HEADACHE

In addition to being wary about smuggled goods, refrigerant buyers now have a new headache to worry about: fraudulently mislabeled refrigerants. On December 20, 1996, refrigerant manufacturer AlliedSignal sent out an urgent memo advising the industry that someone has been marketing cylinders which do not contain R-12 but which are boxed in counterfeit AlliedSignal R-12 boxes! The cylinders themselves have been poorly "doctored up" to look like R-12 cylinders, and we have learned that many of them contain a hydrocarbon-based R-12 substitute instead. AlliedSignal stated that as many as 80 truckloads (88,000 cylinders!) may be circulating. Needless to say, the FBI, EPA, Department of Justice and everyone else is on this case; losses resulting from this and other related refrigerant frauds are expected to be in the tens of millions of dollars. If you are concerned about AlliedSignal R-12 cylinders you have in your possession, contact AlliedSignal or your salesperson for information on how to identify these cylinders.

AND NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS

If you have purchased your refrigerant directly from Refron, you need not take any action at all. Refron has always been and continues to be extremely vigilant about its sources and quality of refrigerant, and has successfully steered clear of any smuggled, contaminated, mislabeled or questionable refrigerant. When you purchase from us, you need not worry about ruining your equipment, or subjecting your company to IRS investigations or U.S. Customs product seizures. Our over 45 years as a supplier of refrigerants has taught us that when it comes to refrigerants our customers would rather be safe than sorry.

CFC'S CONTINUE TO DISAPPEAR FROM MANUFACTURER PRICE SHEETS

The U.S. refrigerant manufacturers continue to remove various CFC products and cylinder sizes from their trade price sheets, as their existing inventories of these products dwindle. (As you know, under the Montreal Protocol new production of CFC's for HVAC use within the United States has ceased as of January 1, 1996.) Ton tanks for most CFC's are no longer available from any of the manufacturers, and many other items are soon to be dropped. For example, DuPont lists only a single cylinder size available for R-11, R-12, R-113, R-114 and R-500, and notes that these sizes too will be eliminated when current inventories are depleted. Supplies of the various CFC's can be found still, in the hands of distributors and reclaimers around the country, although you may need to make a few calls before finding what you need. Or...place one toll-free phone call to **1-800-4-REFRON**. We are well-stocked on all CFC's in all sizes, anywhere you need it. Our motto continues to be "Any Refrigerant, Any Place, Any Time".

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REFRON, INC.

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R409A (FX-56) GAINING IN THE MARKET

Since we supply refrigerants to many thousands of customers across the U.S., in many different market sectors, we are often able to see emerging trends in the use and acceptance of the various new refrigerants. It is always a little surprising when a refrigerant which is introduced late into the marketplace manages to establish a niche and then to gain popularity. Such was the case 2 years ago, when R-507 (trade named AZ-50) was introduced by AlliedSignal as a low temperature HFC replacement for R-502. Initially, R-404a had a huge head start for this niche, and consequently many people assumed R-507 would be a non-starter. Today, R-507 is still very much alive, and has a strong following among those who want a true azeotropic replacement for R-502.

We are beginning to see a similar pattern with R-409A in the "interim blend" market (non-azeotropic refrigerants containing some HCFC's but which allow easy retrofitting of existing CFC systems). Initially, the R-12 interim blend market was dominated almost completely by R-401A (trade name MP-39). However, lately we are seeing a strong movement toward R-409A (trade name FX-56) for this purpose. Atochem's technical literature on R-409A claims greatly reduced oil change requirements when retrofitting from R-12 to R-409A, and possibly this is fueling its growing popularity. For more technical information on this product, you can call the Refron Retrieversm faxback system at (718) 392-0097 and request document # 7305.

REFRON TO PUBLISH NATIONWIDE DIRECTORY OF CYLINDER RECERTIFICATION COMPANIES

If your company owns refrigerant recovery cylinders, you should check the manufacture date (month & year) which is stamped on the collar of the cylinder. According to Department of Transportation regulations, you can not fill used refrigerant into these cylinders after 5 years from manufacture date unless it has been retested and recertified by a D.O.T.-approved cylinder testing facility, upon penalty of a maximum of \$25,000 per violation. Many cylinders now in use were manufactured in 1992, around the time the "no venting" law went into effect, which means they will require recertification sometime in 1997. But where do you go to have your cylinders recertified?

On behalf of our customers, Refron has undertaken to assemble a directory of all companies that are authorized by D.O.T. to perform these recertifications, and who agree to provide this service for refrigerant recovery cylinders. We are completing a nationwide survey and are collecting information on types of cylinders accepted, geographic areas served, pricing and other services offered from over 40 companies around the country. This one-of-a-kind directory will be available free, exclusively to Refron customers, sometime in March, 1997. Please contact your salesperson at that time to receive your copy.

100% ARI PURITY FOR 1996 — THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

We are happy to announce to our customers that for the fourth consecutive year, Refron has achieved a 100% first-test pass rate from the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute's (ARI) Reclaimed Refrigerants Certification Program. This means that every single random sample of any refrigerant we have reclaimed in 1996, and every year since 1993 (the start of the ARI program) has been found by ARI to meet or exceed ARI-700 standard for purity — the same purity as our virgin refrigerants. Our record is second to none. So if you purchase any virgin or reclaimed refrigerants from Refron, you can be assured of perfect purity, all the time. No bad batches, no guesswork.

A RECORD 1,737 NEW CUSTOMERS IN 1996!

We want to thank our 1,737 new customers in 1996 for your vote of confidence in selecting Refron as your refrigerant supplier. And we want to thank all of our longstanding customers as well. It is your loyalty and kind words that have helped our reputation and our business to grow, and we wish you likewise a very successful 1997.

**For More Information, Call your Salesperson Directly, or Call 1-800-4-REFRON
(1-800-473-3766)**