EPA's Refrigerant Recycling Rule

SafetyNet #: 1

In 1993 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established regulations under Section 608 of the Clean Air Act to restrict use and ensure safe management of ozone-depleting Freon compounds.

These regulations prohibit the uncontrolled release of Freon from refrigeration equipment, which includes the requirement that refrigerant be properly removed from equipment prior to disposal. If you wish to dispose or salvage refrigeration equipment (such as air conditioners, growth chambers, refrigerators or freezers), in addition to the requirements for decontamination of laboratory equipment (see SafetyNet #113 [1]), the Freon and compressor oil must also be properly managed. Campus departments should contact Aggie Surplus at 530-752-2145 to initiate disposal of this equipment. Aggie Surplus will pick up the equipment and arrange for proper removal and disposal of refrigerants and oils, as necessary. If the equipment can be sold, there may be no charge to your department. If not, your department will be recharged for the cost of pickup, removal of materials and disposal.

Section 608 also has the following requirements (mostly applicable only to maintenance personnel):

- Implementation of service practices that maximize recycling of ozone-depleting Freon compounds, both chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), during the servicing and disposal of air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment.
- Certification of equipment and technicians performing maintenance, recycling or recovery of refrigerant.
- Restriction of the sale of refrigerant only to certified technicians.
- Persons or organizations that service or dispose of air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment must certify to EPA that they have acquired recycling or recovery equipment and are complying with the requirements of the rule.
- Monitoring and repair of substantial leaks in air-conditioning and refrigeration equipment with a charge of greater than 50 pounds.
- Record-keeping to demonstrate compliance with the regulations.

(EH&S coordinates with staff from Facilities O&M – Refrigeration Shop to ensure that the campus is in compliance with these regulations).

A fact sheet from the EPA summarizing the final rule and its specifications is available by contacting the EPA.
directly at 800-296-1996 (EPA Stratospheric Ozone Information Hotline). You may also find more information on the [EPA’s Ozone Depletion website](http://www.epa.gov/ozone/) [2].

**Contact**

**Environmental Management**
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