

# EPA's Refrigerant Management Requirements

## What Local Governments Need to Know About Appliance Disposal

### What is Section 608 of the Clean Air Act?

EPA regulations (40 CFR Part 82, Subpart F) under Section 608 of the Clean Air Act prohibit the knowing release of refrigerant during the maintenance, service, repair, or disposal of air-conditioning (AC) and refrigeration equipment. EPA requires proper refrigerant management practices by appliance disposal facilities, reclaimers, technicians, anyone recovering refrigerant from appliances, owners and operators of AC and refrigeration systems, those who buy or sell refrigerant, and others. These requirements apply to all refrigerants that contain ozone-depleting substances, e.g., hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), and non-exempt substitute refrigerants, e.g., hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs) and blends thereof (hereafter referred to as “refrigerant”).

A small number of refrigerants are exempt from the refrigerant management requirements. Examples include carbon dioxide, nitrogen, and water. For a full list of exempt refrigerants, see 40 CFR § 82.154(a).

### What are the Section 608 refrigerant management requirements for local governments involved in appliance disposal?

Any person or local government that is involved in the disposal of small appliances (e.g., refrigerators and window air conditioners), motor vehicle air-conditioners (MVACs) (e.g., passenger cars) and MVAC-like appliances (e.g., off-road construction equipment or farming equipment) must comply with the following provisions found in 40 CFR 82.155.

The final processor or final person in the disposal chain is responsible for properly evacuating refrigerant or ensuring via a contract or signed statement that the refrigerant has already been properly evacuated by the supplier. If a local government establishes an account with a final processor, one party will need to be responsible for recovering refrigerant.

If the local government is responsible for collecting appliances from residents for disposal or recycling, and the appliances contain refrigerant, the local government must either:

- Properly recover the refrigerants using equipment that meets refrigerant recovery performance standards used for servicing before delivery of the appliances to final processor; or
- Deliver the appliances to the final processor or an appliance aggregator for refrigerant recovery and proper disposal.

### What are the requirements for refrigerant recovery?

Individuals recovering refrigerant from small appliances, MVACs, and MVAC-like appliances are required by the regulations to use recovery or recycling equipment certified as meeting EPA standards. To ensure that they are recovering the correct level of refrigerant, individuals must use the recovery equipment according to the equipment manufacturer's directions.

For MVAC and MVAC-like appliances, recovered refrigerant can either be recycled on-site using approved equipment designed to both recover and recycle refrigerant, or sent off-site to an EPA-certified reclamation facility to be purified according to AHRI Standard 700, before it can be resold for reuse in another MVAC system.

## What are the requirements for signed statements and contracts?

As detailed in 40 CFR 82.155, local governments that recover refrigerant from appliances prior to delivering the appliances to a final processor will be asked to provide the final processor with a signed statement or to enter into a contract with the disposal facility that addresses how the refrigerant was recovered or will be recovered.

- For individual transactions, signed statements must include the name and address of the person who recovered the refrigerant and the date the refrigerant was recovered.
- For signed contracts between the final processor and suppliers (e.g., a local government), the contract must either state that the supplier will recover any remaining refrigerant from the appliance or shipment of appliances in accordance with the required evacuation levels prior to delivery, or verify that the refrigerant had been properly recovered prior to receipt by the supplier.

If all the refrigerant has leaked out\* of an appliance, the local government will be asked for a signed statement that all the refrigerant in the appliance had leaked out prior to delivery to the final processor and recovery is not possible.

*\*Note that “leaked out” in this context means those situations in which the refrigerant has escaped because of system failures, accidents, or other unavoidable occurrences not caused by a person’s negligence or deliberate acts such as cutting refrigerant lines.*

### Additional Resources

Best Practices for Local Governments Disposing of Appliances:

[www.epa.gov/section608/best-practices-local-governments-disposing-appliances](http://www.epa.gov/section608/best-practices-local-governments-disposing-appliances)

40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 82, Subpart F: [go.usa.gov/xpKhq](http://go.usa.gov/xpKhq)

EPA’s Section 608 Webpage: [www.epa.gov/section608](http://www.epa.gov/section608)

EPA’s Section 608 Safe Disposal Webpage:

[www.epa.gov/section608/stationary-refrigeration-safe-disposal-requirements](http://www.epa.gov/section608/stationary-refrigeration-safe-disposal-requirements)

EPA’s Section 608 Equipment Certification:

[www.epa.gov/section608/refrigerant-recovery-and-recycling-equipment-certification](http://www.epa.gov/section608/refrigerant-recovery-and-recycling-equipment-certification)

Contact EPA: [go.usa.gov/xsftn](http://go.usa.gov/xsftn)

*This document highlights select provisions that may be of most interest to this community. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. It is NOT intended to set forth a policy on a statutory, regulatory, or technical issue, or provide an interpretation of a statute or regulation. Please see the regulations at <https://go.usa.gov/xpKhq> for the full requirements.*