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FACTSHEET

Mining industry and refrigerant management

The refrigerants used in refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) systems for portable buildings and vehicles on mine sites are known as fluorocarbon refrigerants. These refrigerants cause damage to the ozone layer and contribute to global warming if emitted.

Because of this, the use and trade of these harmful refrigerants is controlled under the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989* (the Ozone Act).

For mining companies this means:

- if your business is acquiring, possessing or disposing of fluorocarbon refrigerant, a refrigerant trading authorisation (RTA) is required
- if you are contracting a business to perform RAC services, then they are required to hold the appropriate RTA and use appropriately licensed technicians. You can check on ARC's *Look for the Tick* website at www.lookforthetick.com.au/
- appropriate maintenance and record keeping is required for these RAC systems if you hold an RTA
- it is illegal under the Ozone Act to have systems that leak refrigerant and if ignored, may result in penalties to your business. Leaking refrigerant damages the ozone and increases the risk of skin cancer, among other impacts

- a person who knowingly adds refrigerant to a leaking RAC system (topping up) is committing an offence and this activity may result in penalties
- only use the refrigerant that's specified for each particular system.

Benefits of compliant refrigeration and air conditioning management and regular maintenance include the following:

- **Increased performance of equipment** – Regular maintenance of RAC equipment increases performance, reduces downtime and minimises the risk of refrigerant leaks – which saves you money and helps the environment.
- **Safer workplace** – Proper refrigerant management creates a safer work-place when using refrigerants that are classified as dangerous goods.
- **Meeting warranty conditions** – Proper maintenance of your RAC equipment will reduce the risk of nullifying your warranty.
- **Avoiding penalties** – Reducing emissions means your business is less vulnerable to penalties. Discharging fluorocarbon refrigerant is illegal under the Ozone Act and penalties of up to \$132,000 for individuals and \$660,000 for corporations may apply. Only ARC-licensed technicians can handle and trade fluorocarbon refrigerant in Australia.
- **Environmental protection** – Helps reduce ozone destruction and global warming potential.

Visit www.arctick.org/information/mining to learn more about handling and managing refrigerant safely.



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