

R22 Phase-out information

HCFC-22 (R22) has been commonly used in residential heat pump, air conditioning and refrigeration systems since the 1990s. In 2012, R22 accounted for approximately 26 per cent of the total bank of working gases in Australia.

Australia has a legislated phase-out of HCFCs, in line with its obligations under the Montreal Protocol, and largely phased-out the import of HCFCs in 2016. There is an allowance for a small amount (2.5 ozone depletion potential tonnes a year) which will be permitted to service equipment until 2029.

After 2029, the maintenance of remaining R22-based systems will rely on recycled or reclaimed refrigerant. It is expected that reclamation and recycling will ensure that existing supplies of R22 will last longer and be available to service a greater number of systems.

Important information for users of R22 refrigerant:

- If R22 systems are in good working order, there is no need to transition to an alternative refrigerant/system.
- Regular servicing to minimise leakages is important.
- Existing units using R22 can continue to be serviced with R22.
- Some used R22 is being reclaimed to manufacturer's specifications. Contact your refrigerant supplier for further information.
- Conversion (retrofitting) of existing systems to use a non-ozone-depleting substitute refrigerant. Retrofits are allowed if the substitute refrigerant has been found acceptable for that type of use and it is done in accordance with relevant legislation and Australian Standards.

Alternatives to R22

Equipment manufacturers, refrigerant suppliers, refrigeration engineers, technicians and state and territory work health safety regulators can provide advice on equipment and refrigerant issues, warranties and safety requirements when it comes to finding alternatives to R22 for existing systems.

HCFCs (including R22) are being phased-out globally under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Australia has adopted an accelerated phase-out of HCFCs.

The level of permitted imports and manufacture has decreased progressively since 2012, as shown in the table below.

Year	Annual import limit (ODP tonnes*)
2012, 2013	40
2014, 2015	10
2016 – 2029	2.5
2030	0

**1 ODP tonne equates to 9 metric tonnes of HCFC-141b or 18 tonnes of HCFC-22*

For further information, the Department of the Environment has a [Fact Sheet](#) available on the Phase-out of R22 refrigerant.