

Caring for the climate, one can at a time

Focus on: Motor Vehicle Air Conditioning small cans of refrigerant

Small cans, big impact: what you need to know

Small cans of refrigerant contain greenhouse gases that negatively affect our climate. In fact, these cans often have extra harmful greenhouse gases called hydrofluorocarbons. Releasing just one 16 oz can is like adding 1,400 pounds of carbon dioxide into the air. This equals the amount of electricity your house uses in about six weeks. Stopping these emissions helps protect our climate and keeps our environment cooler and cleaner. Washington's law helps reduce this impact by restricting the sale of small cans of refrigerant.

Understanding small cans of refrigerant

People commonly use small cans of refrigerant, often called Motor Vehicle Air Conditioning (MVAC) cans, to refill leaky air conditioning systems in cars and trucks. However, unless the whole system is repaired, the refrigerant will leak out again. Therefore, [Washington law](#) limits the sale and distribution of these small cans of refrigerants with a global warming potential (GWP) of more than 150 to reduce emissions of these harmful greenhouse gases.

Small Can of Refrigerant

A container that:

- Holds more than 2 ounces but less than 2 pounds of refrigerant
- Is designed to recharge MVAC systems

MVAC System

Air conditioning systems used to cool the cabin of:

- Passenger & light duty vehicles
- Other on-road vehicles
- Off- road vehicle

Staying compliant with the small cans of refrigerant restriction



Here's what the law requires to be compliant with the MVAC can restriction:

Compliant cans



Make sure the refrigerant you sell has a GWP below 150

Vehicle service



Get your system repaired by an EPA certified mechanic

For more information visit: ecology.wa.gov/hfc

Figure 1: Washington law restrictions on small cans of refrigerant

Hydrofluorocarbon restrictions and prohibited refrigerants

Washington law regulates small refrigerant can sales based on their high global warming potential (GWP), which measures their impact on our climate. Businesses cannot sell, distribute, or offer for sale a small can of refrigerant with a GWP over 150. This rule applies to commonly used hydrofluorocarbons products like R-134a in small containers.

These rules went into effect on July 25, 2021. Products that do not meet requirements cannot be sold regardless of the manufacturer's date.



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