

# Large refrigeration, larger climate impacts

## Focus on: Large commercial refrigeration HFC restrictions

### What's the impact?

Hydrofluorocarbons are harmful greenhouse gases that are commonly used in large commercial refrigeration systems. These short-lived “super pollutants” can be thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide, so it is important we reduce their emissions to protect our climate. The good news is that a variety of [climate-friendly, energy-efficient alternatives](#) already exist!

### Understanding the restrictions

Because climate-friendly alternatives are available, [Washington law](#) restricts the use of some high global warming potential (GWP) refrigerants in new large commercial refrigeration systems. The restriction applies to commercial refrigeration systems that use 50 lbs. or more of refrigerant. You can still use and service existing systems, but new systems need to comply with the restrictions listed below in Figure 1. This table can also be found at [WAC 173-443-040](#) under Table 2.

This applies to common cooling systems such as rack systems, chillers, and remote condensing units that cool:

- Cold storage warehouses
  - Examples: large walk-in freezers and coolers
- Supermarket systems and grocery stores
  - Examples: interconnected reach-in or walk-in cold and frozen display cases

### Refrigerant restrictions in new and retrofit refrigeration equipment

End Use	Restricted refrigerants	Effective date
Commercial refrigeration: Retail food refrigeration including chillers	Any refrigerant with GWP>150	January 1, 2025
Commercial refrigeration: Cold storage warehouses	Any refrigerant with GWP>150	January 1, 2025

*These are the same commercial refrigeration restrictions that can be found in WAC-173-443-040, Table 2, which details prohibited end use for specific hydrofluorocarbons*

## Not Restricted

- Use and service of existing systems that use high-GWP refrigerants.
- Recharging existing systems with the same refrigerant (after a leak has been fixed).
- Installing new systems that use refrigerants with GWP less than or equal to 150.

## Restricted

- New systems with refrigerants that have GWP greater than 150 (after effective date)
- Retrofitting old systems using restricted refrigerants with another high-GWP refrigerant (after effective date of Jan. 1, 2029).
- Selling, purchasing, or installing non-compliant systems manufactured on or after the effective date of its end use.

# Compliance Requirements



**For new equipment (manufactured on or after the effective date):**



**Only use the allowed refrigerants for each end use**



**Check manufacture date on new equipment**



**Keep records of refrigerant used and equipment detail for inspection by Ecology**

**For more information visit: [ecology.wa.gov/hfc](https://ecology.wa.gov/hfc)**

*Figure 1: Compliance requirements for new equipment manufactured on or after the effective date.*

## Refrigerant recycling resources

Not sure what refrigerant your unit uses or how to recycle old units? Call 1-800-Recycle or visit [1800recycle.wa.gov](https://1800recycle.wa.gov) for help.



HFC Team  
[HFC@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:HFC@ecy.wa.gov)  
360-407-6800



To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6800 or email at [HFC@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:HFC@ecy.wa.gov), or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-634