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Understanding the AIM Act

WHAT HVAC CONTRACTORS AND BUILDING OWNERS NEED TO KNOW

The **American Innovation and Manufacturing (AIM) Act** gives the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authority to regulate the supply, use, and management of hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) refrigerants with high Global Warming Potential (GWP).

Under the Act's provisions, HFC use will be phased down over a 14-year period by limiting the supply of HFC refrigerants based on reductions in allowable CO₂ emissions resulting from the use of HFCs as shown in the table (relative to figures recorded for 2011–2013). This is likely to result in prescriptive product-specific limits on HFC production and use in new equipment.

Year	Reduction in HFC-derived CO ₂ emissions
2022	10%
2024	40%
2029	70%
2034	80%
2036	85%

Will new products continue to use R-410A and R-134a?

- The EPA plans to move forward with rulemaking to restrict the use of R-410A and R-134a in comfort-cooling chillers (setpoint above 35°F) beginning January 1, 2024. If finalized, all new chillers produced after this time must use an approved refrigerant with GWP below 750.
- The EPA plans to restrict the use of R-410A in new rooftops and splits on January 1, 2025 and in new VRF systems on January 1, 2026. These dates have already been finalized by California and Washington.
- Several states have already finalized restrictions based on the old, vacated EPA SNAP 21, which bans the use of R-410A and R-134a in comfort-cooling chillers on January 1, 2024.

Impact on refrigerant supplies

- **Supplies and availability** of common HFC refrigerants such as R-410A and R-134a **will be increasingly limited** per the schedule in the AIM Act, especially in the later years of the phase-down.
- The EPA is also expected to restrict the use of R-410A and R-134a in other types of new equipment, which **may help maintain a higher level of supply of these refrigerants** to use for HVAC service.

How will contractors and building owners be affected?

- While R-410A, R-134a, and other high GWP HFC refrigerants will be available for service, **prices are expected to increase** as availability decreases.
- The use of **reclaimed high GWP HFC refrigerants** certified to comply with AHRI 700 will help offset the decreased availability of virgin refrigerant.
- **Technicians must be properly trained** to handle and use the new lower GWP refrigerants (some of which will fall under the new ASHRAE 34 A2L lower flammability category) in new equipment.
- The use and return of **refillable cylinders will be required** beginning on January 1, 2025.

Are owners required to convert existing HVAC products to new refrigerants?

- There is **no requirement to convert existing commercial chillers, rooftops, splits, or VRF systems** to operate with new refrigerants.
- Chillers manufactured up to December 31, 2023 as well as residential and commercial unitary equipment manufactured up to December 31, 2024 can continue to operate with refrigerants such as R-410A or R-134a for the life of the unit as long as the refrigerant is available.

Contact your local Carrier expert for information specific to your existing and projected Carrier HVAC systems, equipment, and components.

Additional Information

Consult the original U.S. government sources (at www.epa.gov and www.regulations.gov) used in the development of this document for complete and current information and context:

- EPA Fact Sheet: Final Rule – Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons: Establishing the Allowance Allocation and Trading Program under the American Innovation and Manufacturing (AIM) Act. Office of Air and Radiation (6205T), September 2021.
- American Innovation and Manufacturing (AIM) Act of 2020: Evaluation of Petitions Submitted Under Subsection (i) Seeking Restrictions on Use of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, October 7, 2021.
- EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0044-0223_final rule.pdf. 40 CFR Parts 9 and 84 [EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0044; FRL-8458-02-OAR] RIN 2060-AV17 (Federal Register / Vol. 86, No. 190 / October 5, 2021).
- BILLS-116hr133enr_Section103 AIM Act.pdf. (www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/133/text)