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Building Services

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Out with the Old, In with the New

For more than four decades, R-22 has been the dominating refrigerant in the HVAC field for most commercial and residential air conditioning systems. Unfortunately for our environment, releases of R-22, such as those from refrigerant leaks, contribute to ozone depletion. As part of the Clean Air act to end production of HCFC's (hydro chlorofluorocarbons) **R-22 will eventually be phased out**. Current manufacturers of air conditioning systems are offering equipment that uses ozone-friendly refrigerants. The EPA has examined several of these alternatives to R-22 and has compiled a [list of substitutes](#) that has been determined acceptable by the EPA. One of these substitutes is R-410A, which is manufactured and sold under various trade names, including GENETRON AZ-20®, SUVA 410A®, and Puron®. Additional refrigerants on the list of acceptable substitutes include R-421. This type of refrigerant is unique because it is the superior replacement for R-22. It's formulated with a performance enhancing lubricant that can be topped off multiple times with out oil changes or extra equipment. It is fully backed by a product warranty and does not contain butane or isobutene. In addition its ASHRAE safety classified.

Many building owners may be misinformed about how much longer R-22 will be available to service their central A/C systems. Please let this be informative information to help assist our consumers in deciding what to consider when purchasing a new A/C system or when having an existing system repaired. BCH and their Service Division ConServ can provide you with information about the transition away from R-22, the future availability of R-22 as well as the new refrigerants that are replacing it. After 2010, chemical manufacturers may still produce R-22 to service existing equipment, however **all new equipment sold after 2010 will no longer be R-22**. While consumers should be aware that prices of R-22 may increase as supplies diminish over the next 20 years, the EPA feels that consumers are not likely to be subjected to major price increases within a short time period. Although there is no guarantee that service costs of R-22 will not increase, the prolonged phase-out period for R-22 means that market conditions should not be greatly affected by the volatility.

One important thing a building owner can do for the environment, regardless of the refrigerant used, is to select a reputable contactor that employs service technicians who are EPA-certified to handle refrigerants.

- All Service Technicians employed by BCH and ConServ are EPA certified

- ConServ technicians are equipped with wireless lap-tops
- Provide full refrigerant tracking by piece of equipment
- Environmental history reports which will allow full EPA compliant.

For more information regarding the R-22 phase out, ozone friendly refrigerant and new equipment purchase please contact the below representatives.

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