

# CUSTOM MECHANICAL, INC.

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## The Refrigerant Switch is Upon Us

by Regan Roberts, Chief Operations Officer

The new year is fast approaching and, for those of us in the HVACR (heating, ventilation, air conditioning, refrigerant) industry, that means another major step forward: on January 1, 2010, the United States will prohibit the production of the refrigerant commonly known as R-22. Refrigerants are the working fluid that absorb and transfer heat from one part of the air conditioning system to another; the prohibited refrigerant, R-22, has been linked damage of the ozone layer.

So, what does that mean for you, dear homeowner? If your heating and air conditioning equipment uses R-22, you can keep using it; however, in January, no new R-22 will be produced so it will become more difficult to obtain R-22 as the months progress. This includes R-22 equipment that has already been manufactured. So, while R-22 remains available for servicing equipment made before 2010, it is important to know that supplies of R-22 will become more limited and the price of this refrigerant may increase. This could impact the cost of having your system serviced in the future.

The most important thing to remember if you fall into this category is to minimize your system's impact on the environment by maintaining it properly to curtail refrigerant leaks. Routine servicing minimizes potential environmental hazards and keeps maintenance costs low. In addition, it is illegal to intentionally release any refrigerant into the atmosphere so contractors cannot top off systems with leaks to get them up and running temporarily; these leaks must be repaired.

When you are ready to replace your R-22 equipment, the newest refrigerant used in home air conditioning systems today, known as R-410A, cannot be used in any system not specifically designed for it. R-410A has a higher pressure than R-22, so R-22 equipment components cannot handle the pressure of R-410A. The bonus is that the newer energy efficient air conditioners reduce your energy costs. Even if your air conditioner is only 10 years old, you may see significant energy savings by replacing it with a newer, more efficient model. The energy efficiency of air conditioning systems is measured by their seasonal energy efficiency ratio (SEER). The higher the SEER rating, the more efficient the equipment. Systems that use alternative refrigerants that do not harm the ozone layer, such as R-410A, are available for purchase in a full range of efficiency levels.

As always, at Custom Mechanical we are happy to answer any questions you may have about electrical, heating, air conditioning and plumbing related issues. Our Retail Store offers heating, air conditioning, electrical and plumbing parts and supplies as well as answers to your product or pricing queries. Our Comfort Advisors are available for free estimates and information about financing, manufacturer rebates and, of course, tax rebates. Our Retail Store offers parts and supplies as well as answers to your product or pricing queries. Finally, our website offers more homeowner tips like these as well as on-line scheduling and more detailed information about Custom Mechanical, the people that make us great and the services we offer. Contact us anytime! Locally, 302-539-5177. Toll free, 800-233-5177. Or on the web, [www.custommechanical.com](http://www.custommechanical.com). Take COMFORT, CUSTOM is here to help!

*Written for the "Delmarva Parent" and "Sussex County Woman" November 2009*



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