



ORGANO UFFICIALE
CENTRO STUDI GALILEO

INDUSTRIA formazione

per il tecnico della refrigerazione e climatizzazione



Companies counterattack.

“No” to the illegal imports of refrigerants!



With the F-gas regulation beginning to bite and higher GWP refrigerants becoming expensive and scarce, evidence of illegal imports and sales throughout Europe is increasing. This reality causes significant economic damage to the companies/sector and equally serious prejudice to the safety of the technicians and end users. Some Italian companies decided to fight back reporting some cases to the ATF Association (parts of Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration European Association). Ban on the placing on the market of HFCs in disposable cylinders is emblematic. We display here below a letter issued by a Piedmont company to its network where a real illegal gas traffic has reported.

"QED, the reduction in the supply of EU HFCs has led to shortages and a sharp spike in costs has created an ideal market for groups and sellers who, contrary to the rule of law, have begun to import and distribute products ignoring F- GAS, REACH or T-PED regulation.

Waiting for early intervention from the competent authorities, we would like to bring to your attention that purchase, sold or use refrigerants without having the proper F-GAS license or REACH registration, carries the risk of being investigated by the National control authority. Law is not the only point to consider because the counterfeit refrigerants are not made to the exacting specifications as the genuine branded products, they could be contaminated with toxic or flammable compounds, diluted or even a completely different substance from what is advertised.

Operators should exercise common sense and scepticism to avoid counterfeit refrigerants.

While some of the refrigerant may have been legally imported under a legitimate F-gas quota, the large amount being offered in disposable cylinders suggests that much of it is illegal. The sale of HFCs in non-refillable, disposable cylinders have been banned in Europe since July 2007 (Regulation EU No 517/2014 and repealing Regulation EC No 842/2006).

We recommend that operators only purchase refrigerants from reputable, reliable sources, supplied in refillable, re-usable, traceable cylinders.

The situation is by no means restricted to Italy. The problem seems to extend across all the European member states, including its largest members the France, Germany, Holland, UK and Spain.

For information purposes only, in Italy the violation of the law (D.Lgs. 5 March 2013, n. 26 – Article 9 point 1) shall be punishable by arrest from three (3) to nine (9) months or with a financial penalty from 50,000.00 euros to 150,000.00 euros.”