

## **SIMPLY SAFE DECEMBER 2009**

### **R22 REFRIGERANT – from 01 January 2010**

Back in October 2000, Regulation (EC) No 2037/2000 on (ODS) Ozone Depleting Substances came into force requiring significant changes to the use and manufacture of equipment using ozone damaging gases. Since 2001, the use of HCFCs has been banned in most new equipment with a total ban coming into force for all new equipment after 01 January 2004.

One of the significant dates set out in Regulation (EC) No 2037/2000 was the banning of virgin (new) HCFCs after the 31 December 2009 for the maintenance and servicing of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment.

The suggested plan of action was to establish which HCFC refrigerants were being used and in what equipment. It was then up to businesses to make plans and take actions to either replace existing equipment with new systems; or to keep existing equipment and replace the refrigerant with a non ozone depleting alternative.

With January 2010 getting ever closer, many businesses will have either made the necessary changes or will have replaced equipment since 2001 which is likely to have a suitable alternative to those gases which have been phased out. Those who have existing equipment will still be able to purchase reclaimed/recycled R22 subject to availability.

What you should know:

From 2010 your refrigeration and air conditioning engineers will no longer be able to buy R22 refrigerant. If your equipment relies upon this, then you may have to:

- Pay a premium for recycled R22
- Pay for modifications to your equipment so it can use an alternative
- Replace existing equipment with new

### **THE A-Z OF FOOD SAFETY**

**O is for Organic.....** As most will know, the clamour to provide healthier options to customers has seen a massive growth in the demand for 'Organic Foods' which is policed by the Soil Association. Did you know that the use of the term organic on your menu carries with it a strict burden of proof? As with any menu description, the law states you must not mislead customers by labelling food 'organic' unless you are certain. You may well be the subject of a Trading Standards visit so be sure your suppliers can prove it if requested!

### **NEW WEB SITE**

Perry Scott Nash have offered services through a personalised web site for a number of years, where businesses could find out more about us and what we do whilst at the same time obtaining useful advice and information on safety. If you haven't looked for a while, then perhaps it's time to look again! Our new web site looks better than ever. It offers the same great advice and information and provides an opportunity for you to contact us about the specific business needs. Be sure to have a look at [www.perryscottnash.co.uk](http://www.perryscottnash.co.uk).

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## **CARBON DIOXIDE [Risk Assessment Review, Confined Spaces, Emergency Planning]**

In seeking to review gas safety within many businesses, the risks associated with the storage and use of mixed gases for the dispensing of drinks cannot be ignored. Commonly found in cellars in Pubs, Clubs and Hotels, Carbon Dioxide is often an essential ingredient for the perfect drink. The concerns however are that carbon dioxide is a compressed gas, a known asphyxiant and may be stored in a confined and poorly ventilated area. For these reasons, CO<sub>2</sub> is a significant hazard and one which should be reviewed to ensure the safety of staff and others (e.g. deliverymen) working in the cellar.

In light of recent notifications of episodes where CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders have failed and resulted in a release of gas into cellars, this is a timely reminder for any business who store drinks gases to review their Safety Policies and Risk Assessments.

You must ensure that your staff are fully trained on the safe handling and storage of carbon dioxide cylinders. Staff must know of the dangers of CO<sub>2</sub> and the warning signs to look out for. If you have a carbon dioxide monitor, you should ensure staff recognise and understand this alarm as part their training. You should also ensure the alarm is working effectively and if necessary, routinely maintained.

Finally, do you know what steps to take should you recognise a CO<sub>2</sub> release has occurred or your carbon dioxide alarm indicates there has been a release? Your immediate actions must relate the dangers to all staff and measures must be taken to prevent entry into the cellar. You should then have a plan in place to safely ventilate the cellar; rectify the cause of the leak and to check the gas feed system before reinstating the gas supply. You should also remember that an incident involving the release of CO<sub>2</sub> should be reported under RIDDOR.

An important question to consider should be who will deal with a CO<sub>2</sub> release in an emergency? Consideration should be given to liaising with your bottled gas suppliers.

By ensuring your risk assessments, training and emergency procedures are up to date, you will be ensuring the safety of persons working with CO<sub>2</sub>.

### **NOISE AT WORK UPDATE – Possible effects on unborn children**

It has been suggested that exposure of pregnant workers to high noise levels at work can affect the unborn child. Prolonged exposure to loud noise may lead to increased blood pressure and tiredness. Experimental evidence suggests that prolonged exposure of the unborn child to loud noise during pregnancy may have an affect on later hearing and low frequencies have a greater potential for causing harm.

Employers are required to assess the risks to the safety and health of pregnant workers and adjust the working conditions to avoid exposure. The use of personal protective equipment by the mother in this instance will not protect the unborn child from physical hazard.

Employers should now consider noise during the assessments of pregnant workers and seek to avoid exposure to loud music. Ways in which this will be achieved may include changes in shift patterns to avoid loud music exposure.

### **LEGAL CASE – Retailer fined following failure to assess Contractor**

A furniture and clothing retailer has been fined more than £23,000 after a heavy mock marble fireplace fell on a two-year-old girl and fractured her skull at a Norwich store. On 2 August 2008 the 35kg fireplace surround, part of a shop display, fell as the girl passed by with her parents. She was rushed to Hospital with a subarachnoid haemorrhage. Initially doctors said her prognosis was 'not good', but she went on to make a good recovery.

An investigation was conducted by Norwich City Council with help from Guildford BC EHOs, who obtained statements from the parents involved in a 'virtually identical' incident at a store in Guildford in 2007. The company's procedures had not been followed when selecting a decorator to carry out the installation. The Council said the failure had been 'systematic', rather than a one-off incident.

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