

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Guidance on One Component Foam

Guidance: F Gas and Ozone Regulations

Information Sheet OCF 1: Overview

April 2012

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This was archived in January 2015
For current guidance search GOV.UK for "F Gas"

This Information Sheet provides guidance on compliance with the EU F gas Regulation for producers, distributors and retailers of one component foam (OCF); these organisations are affected if they use HFCs as propellants in OCF. It is illegal to place on the market within the European Union any OCF containing HFCs manufactured after **4th July 2008**.

OCF is used widely in Great Britain for professional and DIY construction applications such as filling gaps between walls, windows and doors and filling pipe run penetrations. OCF is sold in aerosols and in canisters fitted with flexible hoses and guns. OCF contain materials such as isocyanates that, once expressed through a nozzle, react with moisture in the air to cure into expanded rigid foam. OCF producers have historically used fluorinated gases (F gases), usually HFCs, as propellants for the application of OCF, but this will be banned because these chemicals are powerful greenhouse gases and contribute to climate change.

Please note, OCF producers, distributors and retailers may also have other uses of F gases, such as for air-conditioning purposes. Refer to Information Sheet GEN 3 to check whether you have any other applications employing F gases or Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS).

Which Regulations are covered by this Information Sheet?

The EU F gas Regulation is discussed in this Information Sheet. The prohibition of placing on the market OCF with HFC propellant from 4th July 2008 is specified in this Regulation and may affect OCF producers, distributors and retailers.

Please note, if the propellant is a blend or preparation of a number of compounds the Regulation only applies if the resulting preparation has a global warming potential (GWP) of 150 or more. For more information see EU F gas Regulation Annex 1 - Part 1 gives a list of F gases and their GWPs and Part 2 provides a formula for calculating the total GWP of a preparation.

The F Gas Regulation¹ This is EU Regulation 842/2006 on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases.

In Great Britain the Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases Regulations 2009 (Statutory Instrument No 261) applied from 9th March 2009. This Statutory Instrument prescribes amongst other things the offences and penalties applicable to infringements of the EU F gas Regulation.

The EU F gas Regulation and the associated GB Statutory Instrument aim to reduce emissions of the fluorinated greenhouse gases i.e. HFCs, PFCs and SF₆.

¹ See Information Sheet GEN 4 for a list of relevant regulations and links to download the full text.

Who is responsible for compliance?

The relevant part of the Regulations involves “placing on the market of products and equipment containing or whose functioning relies upon, fluorinated greenhouse gases”.

Placing on the market means “the supplying of or making available to a third party within the Community for the first time, against payment or free of charge, products and equipment”.

This means that producers, distributors and retailers must ensure that OCF manufactured after 4th July 2008 does not contain certain fluorinated gas propellants.

It is anticipated that European producers are aware of the impending ban and will already be using suitable HFC alternatives. However, as these Regulations apply only within the Union, producers in other territories will still be allowed to manufacture OCF containing HFCs. In this instance, the onus falls upon the importer/distributor to ensure that any OCF containing HFCs that was manufactured after 4th July 2008 is not introduced into the supply chain in the European Union.

Options for Replacing F Gases

OCF producers using F gases as propellants are already switching from HFCs, such as R134a and R152A to hydrocarbon propellants, such as propane, butane and dimethyl ether for OCF systems. These chemicals have a greater flammability compared to HFCs, but have much lower global warming potential.

Summary of Key Obligations under the EU F Gas Regulation

Manufacturers	OCF manufactured after 4 th July 2008 for sale and use in the European Union must not contain fluorinated gases.
Importers and distributors	OCF sourced from within or outside the European Union, if manufactured after 4 th July 2008, must not contain fluorinated gases.
Retailers	OCF purchased for sale, if manufactured after 4 th July 2008, must not contain fluorinated gases.

Relevant Information for OCF Producers, Distributors and Retailers

Defra has produced a series of Information Sheets that are intended to help those in the OCF supply chain understand their obligations under the F gas and Ozone Regulations.

The following information sheets will be of relevance:

Number	Content of Information Sheet
Information Sheets Addressing OCF Supply Issues	
OCF 1	Short overview for OCF producers, retailers and distributors
General F Gas and ODS Information Sheets	
GEN 1	Glossary of Terms related to F gas and ODS Regulations
GEN 2	Background to F gas and ODS fluids
GEN 3	Overview of markets and equipment affected by the F gas and ODS Regulations
GEN 4	Links to full copies of all relevant Regulations and legislation
GEN 5	Guidance on estimating refrigerant charge.

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The information in this document is intended as guidance and must not be taken as formal legal advice or as a definitive statement of the law. Ultimately only the courts can decide on legal questions and matters of legal interpretation. If you have continuing concerns you should seek legal advice from your own lawyers.

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