

## Press Release No. 62/2007

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## 20th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer

### UBA makes a call for natural refrigerants – proper disposal of used insulation materials and refrigerators

**Twenty years ago, on 16 September 1987, 24 states and the European Community signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer, mainly chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (so-called HCFCs). To date, 191 of the 196 signatory states to the Montreal Protocol have ratified it. The 19th Conference of the Parties is currently taking place in Montreal. Governmental delegates and experts from around the world will focus discussions on speeding up the phaseout of production and use of HCFCs which are still used in refrigeration units and foams. Many signatory states would like to see quicker abandonment of production in industrialised and developing countries alike. The only remaining use of HCFCs allowable in Germany is in old refrigeration systems. Germany was one of the first countries worldwide to discontinue the production of CFCs completely back in 1994.**

The Federal Environment Agency (UBA) believes that units containing HCFCs ought to be replaced by systems with natural refrigerants for the sake of protecting the environment. This is both technically and economically feasible. The Chemical Ozone Layer Ordinance (*ChemOzonschichtV*) stipulates strict measures to improve the tightness of refrigeration systems so as to reduce emissions from old cooling systems. Systems containing three and more kilogrammes of coolant must be tested for tightness at least once a year by a professional.

Caution is advised for all those involved in the remediation of buildings in which insulation materials containing CFCs or HCFCs are present—for example in cold storage warehouses and in roofing insulation produced before 1 January 2002. These insulation materials must be disposed of separately from other construction waste. Consumers are to bring used insulation materials to local recycling plants. As an alternative, old insulation materials can be taken to waste incineration plants, which will prevent the CFCs and HCFCs from escaping into the

atmosphere from the materials' pores. Incineration in modern waste incineration plants are regulated by strict limit values as concerns air pollution. Moreover, fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal can thus be saved.

Considerable amounts of CFC might also be contained in the insulation and refrigerant substances of old household refrigerators. Professional disposal is an absolute must in this case, too, and can be done with the help of the merchant selling a new unit or by a local recycling plant.

**More information on alternatives to the use of substances which deplete the ozone layer is available from Umweltdaten Deutschland Online at (<http://www.env-it.de/umweltdaten/public/theme.do?nodeId=2262> ).**

**A flyer with more information has been put out to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol. It is on the UBA homepage at <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/produkte/fckw/halone.htm>.**

**National and international regulations and research results are featured at: <http://www.umweltbundesamt.de/produkte/fckw>.**

Dessau, 14 September 2007