



News Release

For immediate release

Hydrocarbon Refrigerant DIY kits for air conditioning systems potential fire hazard

May 17, 2012 - Mississauga, Ontario – Anyone who has ever forgotten to lift the lid before lighting their propane barbecue knows how volatile, and highly flammable, this fuel source can be. Would you then risk using such a potentially hazardous product in your air conditioning system?

This is exactly what mass marketers and retailers are suggesting that home and building owners do by promoting a hydrocarbon refrigerant “Do-It-Yourself (DIY)” kit as a replacement refrigerant gas for residential or commercial air conditioning systems. Unlike the non-flammable refrigerants used by a qualified air conditioning technician, hydrocarbon refrigerants are made up of a mixture of propane and isobutene and are extremely flammable similar to the gas in a barbecue tank.

The use of such a flammable refrigerant in a home or building can create a serious fire and explosion risk as the heating and air conditioning systems typically involve combustion flames and spark igniters that are potential ignition sources. A leak in the refrigerant system could bring flammable vapours in contact with such an ignition source, with potentially fatal consequences.

“With the air conditioning season nearly here, Canadians need to know that flammable refrigerants used in home or business air conditioning systems can create the potential for a serious explosion and fire, which could result in injury or death” stated Warren Heeley, President of The Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada (HRAI).

In addition to the potential for fire and explosion, the refrigerants used in these DIY kits are not approved for use in air conditioning systems already installed in the home or business and their use could cause environmental damage if the existing refrigerants in these systems are not properly recovered. Improper mixing of existing refrigerant with the DIY hydrocarbon refrigerant could also have a negative impact on the operation of the air conditioning system, potentially causing added repair or replacement expenses to the home or building owner.

Prior to purchasing these hydrocarbon refrigerant DIY kits, home and business owners should be fully aware of the potential hazards and liability of using hydrocarbon refrigerants in air conditioning systems. Is the risk of fire, explosion and environmental damage as well as the potential degradation of the air conditioning system worth saving a few dollars? Or are some jobs best left to the experts?

Click on the link for additional information about [hydrocarbon refrigerants](#). To locate a qualified contractor to service your air conditioning system, visit www.hrai.ca or call 1.877.467.HRAI (4724).

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