Section 608's Effect on the Future of Refrigeration Repair

Rules for compliance in disposal of parts, fluids, and other aspects of repair have become heavily enforced and the role of certified technicians become increasingly clearer and more lucrative.

While some may see this governance as a hindrance within their daily job, the existence of such stringent legal guidelines actually provides greater differentiation and increased potential for trained and certified individuals in career fields such as refrigeration repair. The differentiation designated through training certification shines a light for the general public on the importance of using knowledgeable repair technicians and this creates the heightened potential for these technicians as part of their career outlook, through increased demand and public respect for those with that training.

As an example, Section 608 of the Clean Air Act of 1990 and its amendments of 1993, 1994, 2003 and beyond enacted strict requirements for recycling of refrigerant fluids. Obviously more time consuming and governed than the days of just dumping such fluids into a drainage ditch or backyard, this law takes effort to follow but also establishes technician certification as highly important. Through publicity of this law on broadcast television, other media, and in refrigerator operators' manuals, the public has learned of the key role qualified professionals â€“ the certified refrigeration repair technicians â€“ play in compliance and how much easier it is for a consumer or business owner to utilize a technician instead of struggling with working around the law toward repair or skirting of legal issues, on their own.

Section 608 and its subsequent amendments restricted the sale of refrigerants to certified technicians. This further enhanced the role of a modern, certified refrigeration repair technician as the public cannot access necessary refrigerants for their equipment. Other examples of the law's solidification of the future of qualified, certified repair technicians are:

* Venting Prohibition â€“ Section 608 mandates that release of refrigerants into the atmosphere through venting will not be tolerated. Some escapes of ozone-depleting substances are acceptable, but the line drawn by the federal government certainly makes use of a certified technician important.
* Evacuation Requirements â€“ Technicians are provided with strict guidelines regarding how and when fluids are to be evacuated and recovered from refrigeration equipment during maintenance, repair, and recycling.
* Reclamation â€“ When refrigerant changes ownership, it must be cleaned as specified by the ARI 700-1993 Standard of Purity by a designated EPA Certified Refrigerant Reclaimer.
* Leak Repair Deadlines â€“ No longer can refrigerant leaks be overlooked or dismissed by equipment owners without penalty. Most large leaks must be repaired within 30 days of discovery, as enforceable by law. There are exceptions to the law, but a certified technician will need to be fully involved in order to determine cause, remedy, and compliance.
* Recycling, Disposal, and Reporting Guidelines â€“ Technicians are certified after being educated in the legal requirements toward recycling, disposal, and reporting of activities associated with the maintenance and repair of refrigeration equipment. Owners and operators will almost never hold this certification themselves, so the technician will remain at the top of the proverbial refrigeration food chain.

It used to be true that repairs on equipment such as HVAC and refrigeration units were potentially completed at a lower cost by a general fix-it person or maintenance man. These days, newer laws which may at times frustrate those who did not start their career under such governance are extremely beneficial to anyone seeking to create and maintain a career in refrigeration repair. The occupational outlook for certified refrigeration repair technicians is one of longevity, security, and continued growth, thanks much to Section 608 and the ever-watchful eye of the federal government.

About the Author

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