

Refrigerants, Naturally!



What have we achieved so far?

THE COCA-COLA COMPANY, MCDONALD'S AND UNILEVER RECOGNIZED BY U.S. EPA FOR LEADERSHIP IN FIGHTING GLOBAL WARMING Commitment to HFC-free refrigeration technologies lauded by Greenpeace

WASHINGTON DC, May 4, 2005 - In recognition for their leadership in developing innovative ways to combat global warming, The Coca-Cola Company, McDonald's and Unilever were awarded the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Protection Award at a ceremony in Washington, DC. The companies share the award for their joint efforts in promoting the development of environmentally friendly commercial refrigeration technology.

"McDonald's, Unilever and Coca-Cola show what leadership and ingenuity can do in helping to protect our global environment," said Kathleen Hogan, the EPA's Director of the Climate Protection Partnerships Division.

Working closely with suppliers, the three companies, who between them operate 12 million coolers and freezers, have been developing, testing and deploying HFC-free refrigeration technologies that reduce the global warming impact and energy usage of their commercial equipment. These efforts have been seen as a significant contribution to the protection of the environment not only by the U.S. EPA but also by organizations such as Greenpeace and catalysed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are gases used in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment and are considered global warming pollutants, trapping the sun's heat in the atmosphere. While debate exists over specific projections for HFC emissions contribution to global climate change in 2050, virtually all of the research projects an increase. If current trends were to continue in the industry, HFC's overall contribution to global warming pollution would increase from 1.5% today to somewhere between 2% - 3% and 8.6% by 2050.

"The efforts being made by Coca-Cola, McDonald's and Unilever mark a significant contribution in the fight to stop global warming," said John Passacantando, Greenpeace Executive Director. "Their commitment shows that some U.S. corporations understand the urgency of global warming and are taking action now. While we welcome the EPA's recognition of these advances in using less harmful refrigerants, we challenge other companies to follow their lead, they cannot do it alone."

As part of this initiative the three companies hosted an international 'Refrigerants, Naturally' conference in 2004 that for the first time brought together the food and drink industry, its supply chain, international and non-governmental organizations to discuss HFC-free refrigeration solutions. At the conference the companies showcased progress made to date and recommitted themselves to an energy-efficient, HFC-free future. Coca-Cola, McDonald's and Unilever are influencing change in refrigeration technology buying and supplier trends and calling upon other businesses to join their initiative. In addition, all three companies are making considerable investments in research and development of climate-friendly technologies.

"As industry leaders it is our responsibility to invest in the research and development necessary to take us toward an HFC-free, climate-friendly future," said Jeff Seabright, Vice President, Environment and Water Resources, The Coca-Cola Company. "We hope that other companies will now join our commitment to sustainable refrigeration. Buy working together, we can continue to reduce the impact of commercial equipment on the environment."

"The actions by these multinationals demonstrate the amazing power of the technological innovations and enormous potential of private sector partnerships to contribute to the goals of sustainable development," said Rajendra Shende, United Nations Environment Programme.

The companies' R&D efforts include clear commitments to move to an HFC-free, commercially viable and more energy efficient future. The technologies under development include hydrocarbons, carbon dioxide, Stirling, thermoacoustic and solar cooling. Tests confirm that these technologies, while at different stages of commercial availability, are viable, efficient and reliable. Technologies like hydrocarbon and carbon dioxide are already operating in the marketplace, while others will benefit from further development and optimization.

Note to Editors:

Recipients of the 2005 EPA Climate and Ozone Awards are invited to a special briefing on the future of climate technology strategy. The meeting will provide recipients with the opportunity to explore the basic strategic challenges with thought leaders and policy makers who are shaping the climate technology horizon. This initiative inaugurates a permanent forum for public-private sector deliberation on the role of industrial technology in controlling the atmospheric impact of global industrial development.