

## Kwik-Fit goes Green via Red with BOC

Kwik-Fit, Europe's largest automotive fast-fit provider, has teamed up with industrial gases supplier BOC to ensure that the company fully complies with the latest environmental regulations.

Fluorinated gases or 'F-Gases' are powerful greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change. With new EU legislation on their use in vehicle, commercial and domestic air-conditioning units, the automotive aftercare sector is undergoing one of its most radical changes in recent years. And some companies are determined to do their bit.

The F-Gas legislation (Regulation (EC) 842/2008) came into effect across the EU in July 2007. F-Gases such as R134a, the refrigerant used in cars, must now be supplied in reusable cylinders that are refilled, checked and treated by an authorised supplier such as BOC. Kwik-Fit took the initiative and worked with BOC, a member of the Linde Group, to implement an immediate change across its network, replacing traditional disposable refrigerant cylinders with refillable models. Within weeks, BOC had delivered over 850 cylinders nationwide.

Gordon Brodie, National Equipment Manager at Kwik-Fit, explains. *"All 670 Kwik-Fit centres across the UK are equipped to service and recharge air conditioning units. R134a, , has a global warming potential (GWP) 1,300 times that of carbon dioxide, the gas most often associated with global warming. As industry leader and an environmentally responsible company, we felt it was vital to set the standard in addressing this issue and meeting the new requirements."*

The Kwik-Fit Group has already taken steps to reprocess other waste products such as tyres, filters and oil. The move to implement the F-Gas Regulations are further evidence of the seriousness with which it takes its environmental and social responsibilities. As Europe's largest fast-fit provider, the Kwik-Fit Group services approximately 7.5 million customers a year, recharging and cleaning their air-conditioning units at 1,800 centres

While Kwik-Fit have responded immediately to the new challenge, others have not as Barry Lyons, business development manager for refrigerants at BOC explains: *"While many of the major corporate service groups have already started to use refillable cylinders, it's clear that many in the aftercare market are still unaware of the regulations. That is why we have launched the Go Green via Red initiative, to help automotive engineers comply with the new legislation."*

In addition to legal compliance, there are a number of good business reasons for switching to the new cylinders. Increasingly, as public awareness increases, customers will look to use environmentally responsible service providers. Companies will also be able to demonstrate their social and environmental commitment to stakeholders and shareholders.