

INFOS**NEWS**

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Valeo develops environmentally friendly R744 air conditioning system

PARIS, France, July 29, 2004 - Valeo today announced that it had successfully developed an environmentally friendly air conditioning system which meets future EU regulations. The system replaces the current HFC R134a refrigerant used in car air-conditioning systems with the R744 refrigerant and consequently eliminates the direct impact of air-conditioning systems on global warming due to refrigerant leakage.

The Valeo R744 system - based on CO₂ - was recently tested on a demonstration vehicle by automotive experts at the SAE Alternate Refrigerant Symposium in Phoenix, USA and successfully concluded three days of formal tests with ambient temperatures up to 43°C in both city traffic and highway driving conditions.

"Valeo is leading the development of future of air conditioning systems in order to enhance comfort for all car occupants while minimizing the environmental impact. We expect to see these systems in the market by 2009," said Thierry Morin, Valeo Chairman & CEO.

The replacement of current refrigerants with R744 represents a significant technology breakthrough due to the significantly higher pressure requirements of the air conditioning cycle. The environmental benefits are achieved due to the R744 refrigerant having a Global Warming Power more than a thousand times lower than the current HFC R134a. In addition to the environmental benefits, there are servicing cost benefits for the automotive industry as there will be no need to recover and recycle the refrigerant at the end of life.

A European regulation is currently in the stages of finalization that will lead to a ban on the use of HFC R134a in 2011 model passenger cars sold in Europe. The introduction of the R744 system will enable car manufacturers to comply with this regulation for air-conditioning systems.

Valeo is an independent industrial Group fully focused on the design, production and sale of components, integrated systems and modules for cars and trucks. Valeo ranks among the world's top automotive suppliers. The Group has 128 plants, 65 R&D centers, 9 distribution centers and employs 68,800 people in 25 countries worldwide.

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