

Contractor Service Tips



Migration

Q: What is 'migration'?

Migration is the term used to describe when refrigerant moves some place in the system where it is not supposed to be, such as when liquid 'migrates' to the compressor sump. This phenomenon occurs because refrigerant will always migrate to the coldest part of a system. As an example, in a split air-conditioning system with the compressor/condenser outside, liquid refrigerant from the evaporator will migrate to the compressor during winter months due to the compressor being colder than the indoor (evaporator) temperature. If this is not prevented, then upon start-up in the spring, compressor slugging and damage may occur.

Q: How can I prevent migration?

There are two common methods used to prevent migration:

- Use of a 'pump down system'
- Use of crankcase heaters to 'drive off' any liquid refrigerant

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