they are receiving. While most mixed refrigerants can be reclaimed, it can be costly and time consuming.

“The contractors who are mixing refrigerants are adding costs to the collection of the refrigerants, which will eventually lead to higher prices charged to refrigerant that is turned in,” said Grolle.

Kestenbaum added that the percentage of mixed refrigerants has inevitably increased as the number of different replacement refrigerants and alternatives has increased.

“Education is key to minimizing refrigerant mixing, starting with labeling systems when replacements are installed to ensuring contractors have recovery tanks for each kind of refrigerant,” he said.

Ferranti noted that A-Gas is also seeing an increase in mixed refrigerants, but he said the company views it as an opportunity.

“We are seeing more and more mixed R-22 coming back through reclaim streams,” he said. “But A-Gas is continuing to invest in our world-class separation processes to ensure we can handle all mixes and volumes coming in through recovery/reclamation.”

Another challenge for reclaimers will simply be sustaining their businesses, said Grolle. Not only is the decreasing cost of R-22 an issue, but imported HFCs are having an effect, too.

“HFC dumping by China is in full swing, and despite

NO SHORTAGE: Given current replacement rates, as well as subsequent reclaimed R-22 each year and continued awareness of the importance of reclaim, Aspen Refrigerants does not anticipate a shortage of R-22 anytime soon.