

# **BUILDINGENERGY NYC**

---

## **Multifamily Central Heat Pump Water Heating Retrofits: Learning the Hard Way**

**El Hadji Niang and Nick Young,  
Association for Energy Affordability**

Curated by Amalia Cuadra (EN-POWER)

---

**Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA)**

**October 12, 2023**

# Multifamily Central Heat Pump Water Heating Retrofits

Learning the Hard Way



**Nick Young** (he/him)  
Director, Zero Carbon Buildings



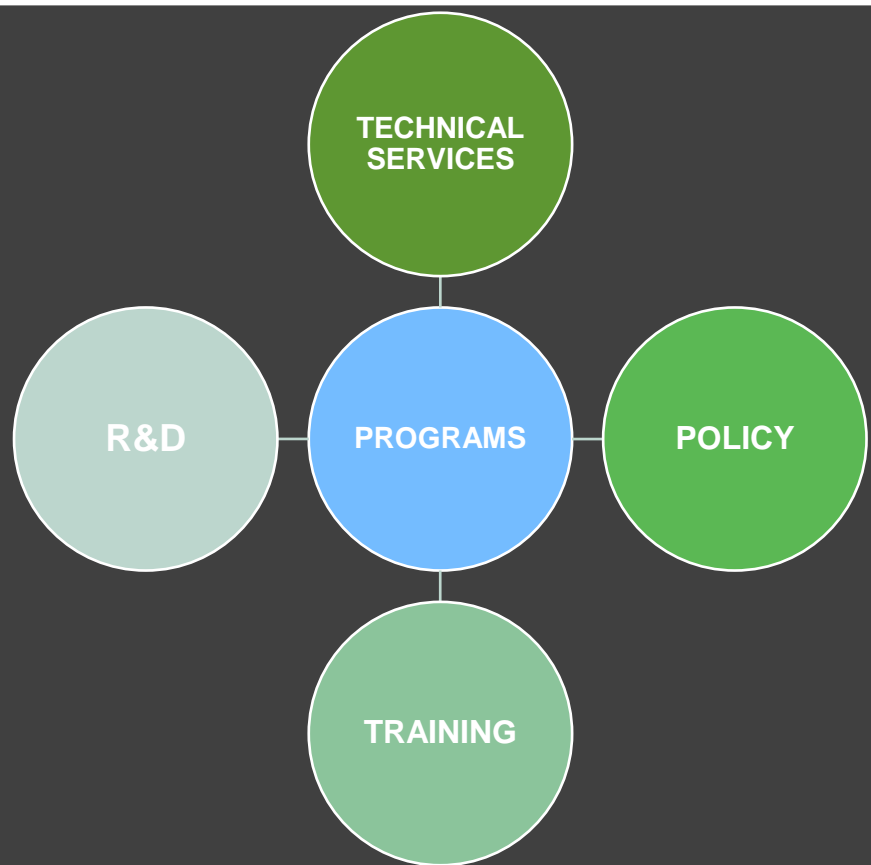
**El Hadji Niang**  
Energy Efficiency Engineer

October 12, 2023

BuildingEnergyNYC 2023

# About AEA





# The Challenge





**Electrify Existing  
Central Fossil Fuel  
Domestic Hot Water**

The background features a series of overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of teal and light green. A large, light green triangle points downwards from the top right. Below it, a darker teal triangle points upwards. The bottom of the image is a solid dark green horizontal bar.

Funding

# Project Funding Sources

FEDERAL

STATE

REGIONAL

OWNER





# The Projects



# New York Projects



# Project Sites – New York



Site	Install Type	Dwelling Units	HPWH Product	Recovery (btu/hr)	Storage Volume (gal)	Storage Ratio (gal/ton)	Status
Bronx 1	Retrofit	65	Lync	988k	975	12	Construction Complete – Pending electrical service
Bronx 2	Retrofit	38	Lync	658k	585	11	Construction Complete – Pending electrical service
Bronx 3	Retrofit	40	Lync	658k	575	10	Construction Complete – Pending electrical service
Bronx 4	Retrofit	21	Lync	420k	585	17	Construction Complete – Pending electrical service
Bronx 5	Retrofit	38	Aermec	455k	475	13	Construction complete \ Pending Control Wiring & Electrical service
Far Rockaway	Retrofit	119	Lync	988k	1500	18	Construction Complete - Pending Startup (10/17/2023)
Manhattan	Retrofit	50	Mitsubishi	408k	900	26	Construction Complete - Pending electrical service

# Bronx 1



# Bronx 2



# Bronx 4



# Bronx 5



# Manhattan





# Manhattan 2



# California Projects



# Project Sites - California



Site	Install Type	Dwelling Units	HPWH Product	Recovery (btu/hr)	Storage Volume (gal)	Storage Ratio (gal/ton)	Status
San Francisco 1	Retrofit	81	Mitsubishi	273k	357	16	Complete
San Francisco 2	Retrofit	133	Mitsubishi	273k	2,150	95	Complete
San Francisco 3	Retrofit	119	Mitsubishi	273k	1,350	59	Complete
East Palo Alto	Retrofit	28	Mitsubishi	273k	300	13	Complete
	Retrofit	20		273k	300	13	
San Diego	Retrofit	74	Mitsubishi	273k	785	35	Contracting
Fontana	Retrofit	90	Mitsubishi	136k	300	26	Contracting
				136k	600	52	
Fresno	Retrofit	53	WaterDrop	139k	505	44	Commissioning
		53		139k	505	44	

# San Francisco 1



# San Francisco 2



# San Francisco 3



# East Palo Alto



Fresno





# The Equipment



# Lync Aegis A



		Models		
		250	350	500
Refrigerant		R744 (CO <sub>2</sub> )		
Capacity (77°F ambient)	MBH	210	329	494
Capacity (14°F ambient)	MBH	133	223	310
Input Power	kW	16.1	26.8	41.9
Power Supply		480 V / 3 ph / 60 Hz		
Sound Pressure	dB(A)	68	73	76
Configuration		HP, Secondary Hx Skid, Tank(s)		
Storage Volume	Gal	250, 500		

# Mitsubishi Heat<sub>2</sub>O



MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC TRANE HVAC US



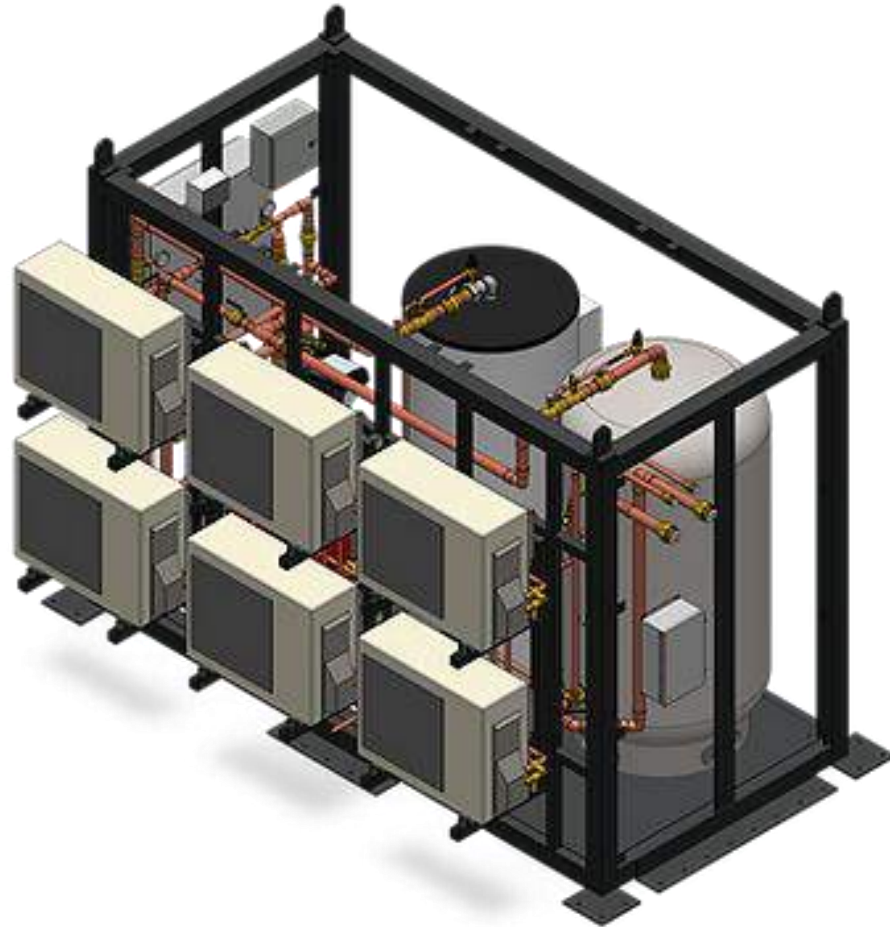
		Model
		QAHV
Refrigerant		R744 (CO <sub>2</sub> )
Capacity (77°F ambient)	MBH	136
Capacity (15°F ambient)	MBH	136
Input Power	kW	16.1
Power Supply		208/230V* / 3 ph / 60 Hz
Sound Pressure	dB(A)	56
Configuration		HP, Secondary Hx (Skid), Tank(s)
Storage Volume	Gal	*480V will be available in future 175, 285, 500

# Aermec NRK700



		Model
		Aermec NRK700
Refrigerant		R410A
Capacity (45°F ambient)	MBH	593
Capacity (12°F ambient)	MBH	455
Input Power (45°F ambient)	kW	57.2
Power Supply		460V* / 3 ph / 60 Hz
Sound Pressure	dB(A)	59.9 at 33ft
Configuration		2-pipe heat pump unit
Storage Volume		Custom engineered per project

# WaterDrop

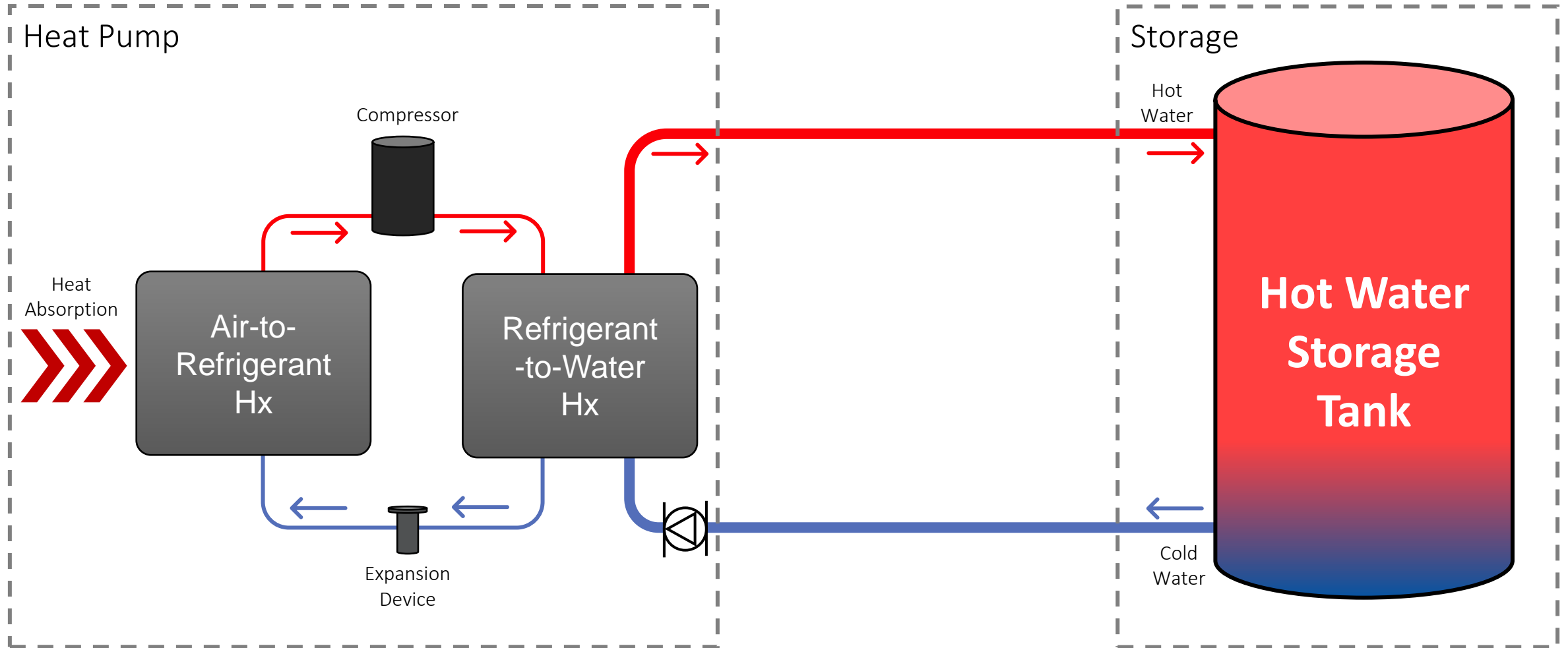


		Model
		WaterDrop / Droplet
Refrigerant		R744 (CO <sub>2</sub> )
Capacity (77°F ambient)	MBH	31-185
Capacity (15°F ambient)	MBH	31-185
Input Power	kW	16.1
Power Supply		208/230V* / 3 ph / 60 Hz
Sound Pressure	dB(A)	37 per HP (up to 12)
Configuration		Factory-Built Skid
Storage Volume	Gal	175, 285, 500

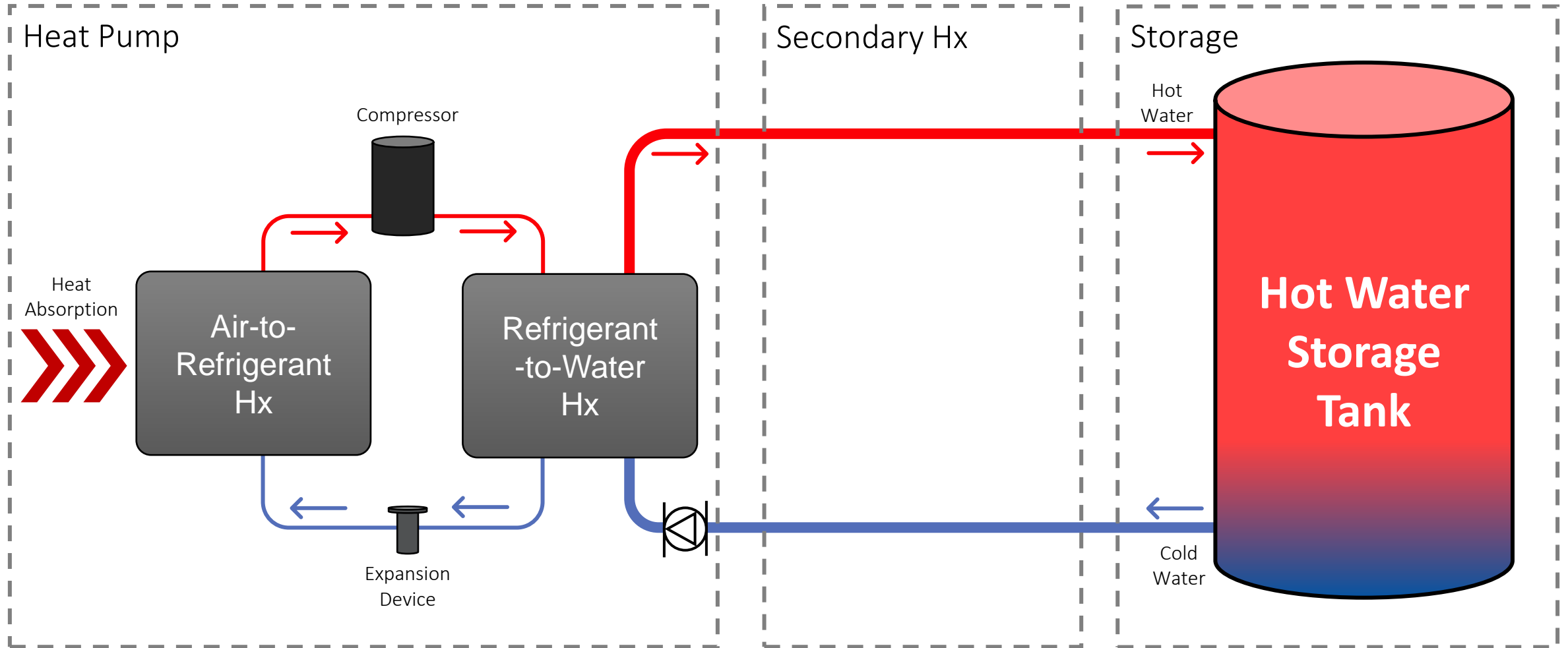
# Components



# Basic HPWH Components

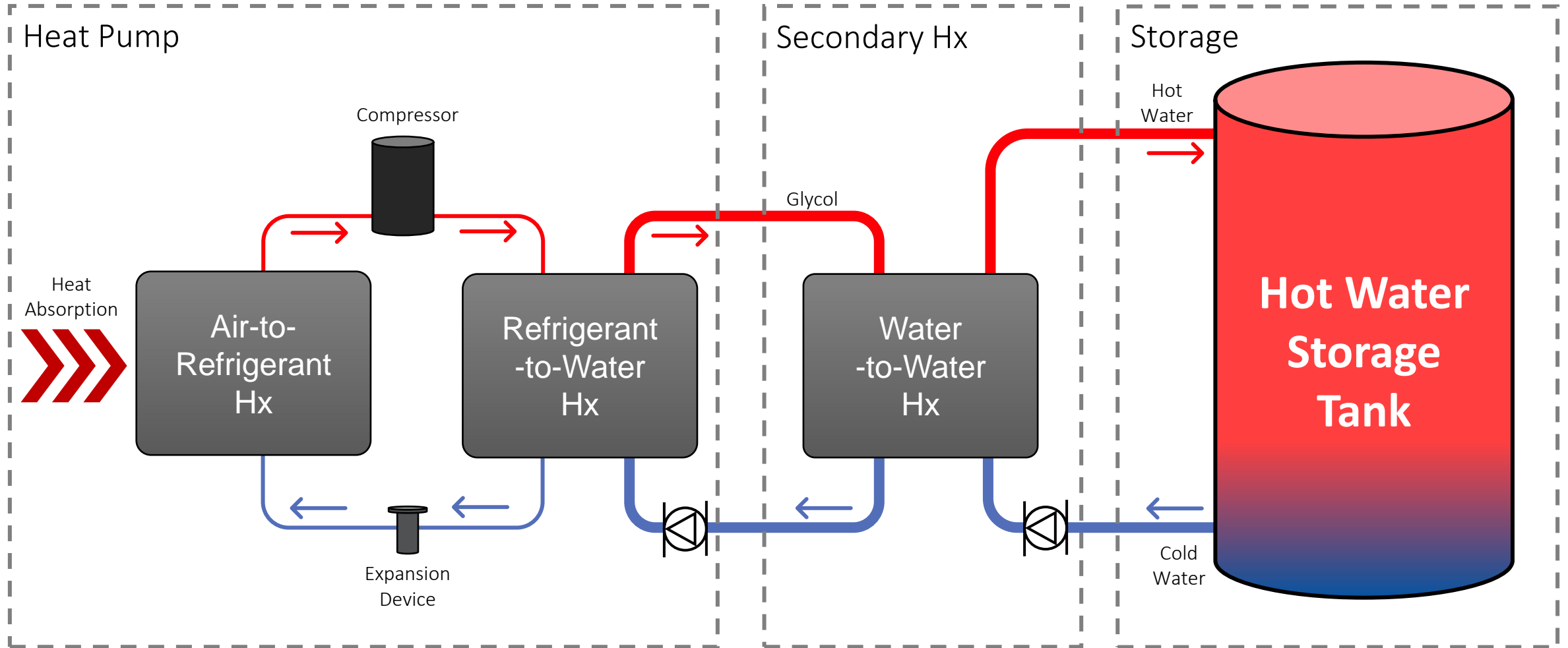


# HPWH + Secondary Heat Exchanger

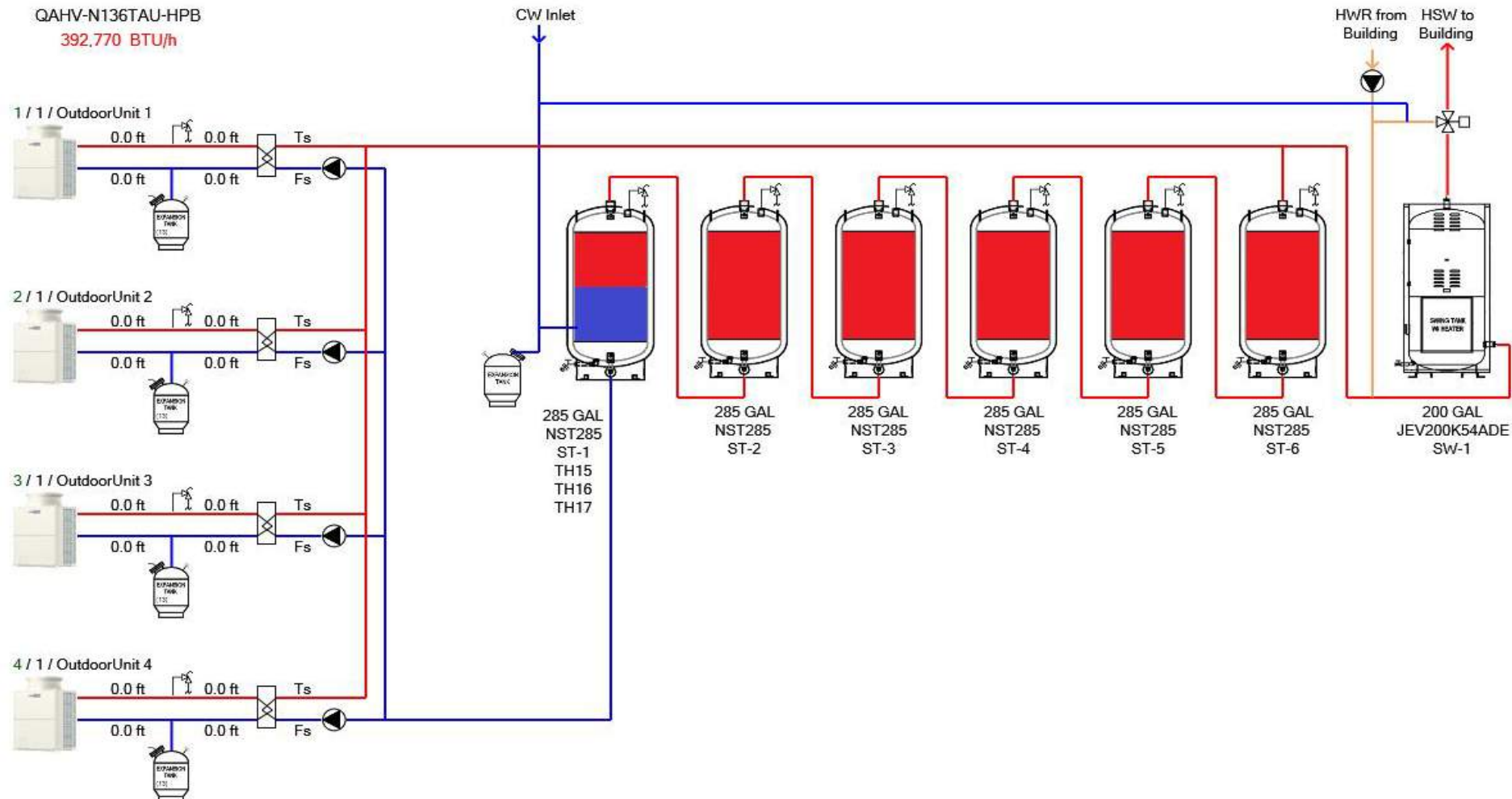




# HPWH + Secondary Heat Exchanger



# Full System Diagram Example



# Design Considerations



# Impact of Outdoor Air Temperature

The background features a light teal color with abstract geometric shapes in a slightly darker shade of teal. These shapes include a large triangle pointing upwards on the right side and a smaller triangle pointing downwards below it. The overall design is clean and modern.

# Rated Capacity vs. Needed Capacity

e360a performance for 140F LWT

H2O inlet temperature (f)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
H2O outlet temperature (f)	130	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
Ambient DB (f)	10	24	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	
Ambient RH	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Heating capacity (kbtu/h)	98	126	141	171	205	241	287	333	351	351	
Cooling capacity (kbtu/h)	60	76	88	112	140	171	211	252	269	269	
Unit heating COP	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.9	
H2O flow rate (gpm)	2.2	2.5	2.8	3.4	4.1	4.8	5.7	6.6	7.0	7.0	
H2O flow rate (gph)	130	151	169	205	245	288	343	399	420	420	

**Pay Attention when sizing and selecting equipment!**



# Sizing Example – Aermec NYK

## PERFORMANCE SPECIFICATIONS

## AERMEC – NYK Series

NYK 500

Heating performance *°F / 120.0°F, Outside air 47°F (2)		
Heating capacity	BTU/h	347,087
Input power	kW	35.02
Heating total input current	A	53
COP	kW/kW	2.904
Water flow rate system side	gpm	62.09
Heating performance *°F / 120.0°F, Outside air 17°F (3)		
Heating capacity	BTU/h	243,246
Input power	kW	34.43
COP	kW/kW	2.071
Water flow rate system side	gpm	62.09

(1) Reference conditions: AHRI std 550/590 I-P; Service side water 54.0°F / 44.0°F; Outside air 95°F

(2) Reference conditions: AHRI std 550/590 I-P; Service side water \*°F / 120.0°F; Outside air 47°F

(3) Reference conditions: AHRI std 550/590 I-P; Service side water \*°F / 120.0°F; Outside air 17°F

**29% DIFFERENCE**

# Sizing Example – Aermec NYK

Property with 500,000 btu/hr of domestic hot water load.

To meet load:

- **New York**

- 3x Aermec NYK 500 units

- **San Francisco**

- 2x Aermec NYK 500 units

But with more storage capacity, you could install **2 in NYC** and **1 in SF** and meet your needs.

# Audience Challenge: Rated Capacity

## Aegis A Specifications



**What is the nominal rated capacity in MBH of the “500” unit below?  
At what outdoor temperature?**

		250	350	500	
Performance	Nominal Heating Capacity** @ 77°F air	MBH	210	329	494
	Input Power**	kW	16.1	26.8	41.9
	Nominal Recovery Capacity	GPH	233	365	549
	COP		3.8	3.6	3.5
	Outlet water temperature range		140-185°F		
	Ambient temperature range		-4-113°F		
			600°F		



# Electrical Capacity

The background features a series of overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of teal and light green. On the right side, there are two large, upward-pointing triangles. The top triangle is a very light, almost white-green, while the bottom triangle is a slightly darker shade of light green. To the left of these triangles, there is a solid, medium-dark teal shape that extends from the left edge towards the center. The overall composition is clean and modern.

# Electrical Upgrades May Be Needed

Depending on added electrical load, may need to upgrade electrical service



# Heat Pump Electrical Requirements



		250	350	500	
Electric	FLA	A	35.4	38.8	73.8
	MCA	A	55	72	110
	MOP	A	80	110	175
	Power Supply		480 V / 3 ph / 60 Hz		



Voltage	Total RLA (Compressor + Fan)	Wire & Disconnect Sizing	
		MCA	MOCP/MFS
208-230/3/60	105	135	150
440-480/3/60	52	67	70

# Heat Pump Electrical Requirements



Unit Type		QAHV-N136TAU-HPB(-BS)
Nominal Heating Capacity (208/230V)	Btu/h (kW)	136,480 (40)
Guaranteed Operating Range *1	°F (°C)	-13 to 109.4 (-25 to 43)
Outlet Water Temperature Range	Primary Circuit only, °F (°C)	120 to 176 (48.9 to 80)
	With secondary HEX, °F (°C)	120 to 158 (48.9 to 70)
Inlet Water Temperature Range	°F (°C)	41 to 145 (5 to 62.7)
External Dimensions (H x W x D)	In. (mm)	72.3 x 48.0 x 29.9 (1837 x 1220 x 760)
Net Weight (Dry)	Lbs. (kg)	868 (394)
Operating Weight	Lbs. (kg)	882 (400)
External Finish		Acrylic painted steel plate <MUNSELL 5Y 8/1 or similar>
Electrical Power Requirements	Voltage, Phase, Hertz	208/230V, 3-Phase, 60Hz
Minimum Circuit Ampacity (MCA)	A	67
Maximum Overcurrent Protection (MOP)	A	110

# Heat Pump Electrical Requirements



		250	350	500	
Electric	FLA	A	35.4	38.8	73.8
	MCA	A	55	72	110
	MOP	A	80	110	175
	Power Supply		480 V / 3 ph / 60 Hz		

**480 V unit will require step up transformer.**

Considerations:

- Cost
- Noise
- If multiple heat pump units – one large transformer vs individual transformer for each outdoor unit

# Electrical Upgrades



# Utility Costs

The background features a dark teal horizontal bar at the bottom. Above it, the space is filled with overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of teal and light green. On the right side, there are two large, light green triangles pointing upwards, one above the other. On the left side, there is a dark teal shape that looks like a trapezoid or a rectangle with a slanted top edge, partially overlapping the light green shapes.

# Utility Costs

When calculating utility cost, do not forget to include **demand charges!**

- More heat pumps = higher demand charges

Also look into future **electrical rate changes** or potential to switch to different electric rates to reduce costs.

More reasons to **minimize heat pumps** and **maximize storage capacity**.





# Equipment Location

# Indirect Gas DHW vs HPWH

Generating domestic hot water with a **steam boiler** only requires a tankless coil.

Takes up virtually no space in the building.



# Indirect Gas DHW vs HPWH

Generating domestic hot water with **heat pumps** requires outdoor units, storage tanks, heat exchangers, and electrical equipment.



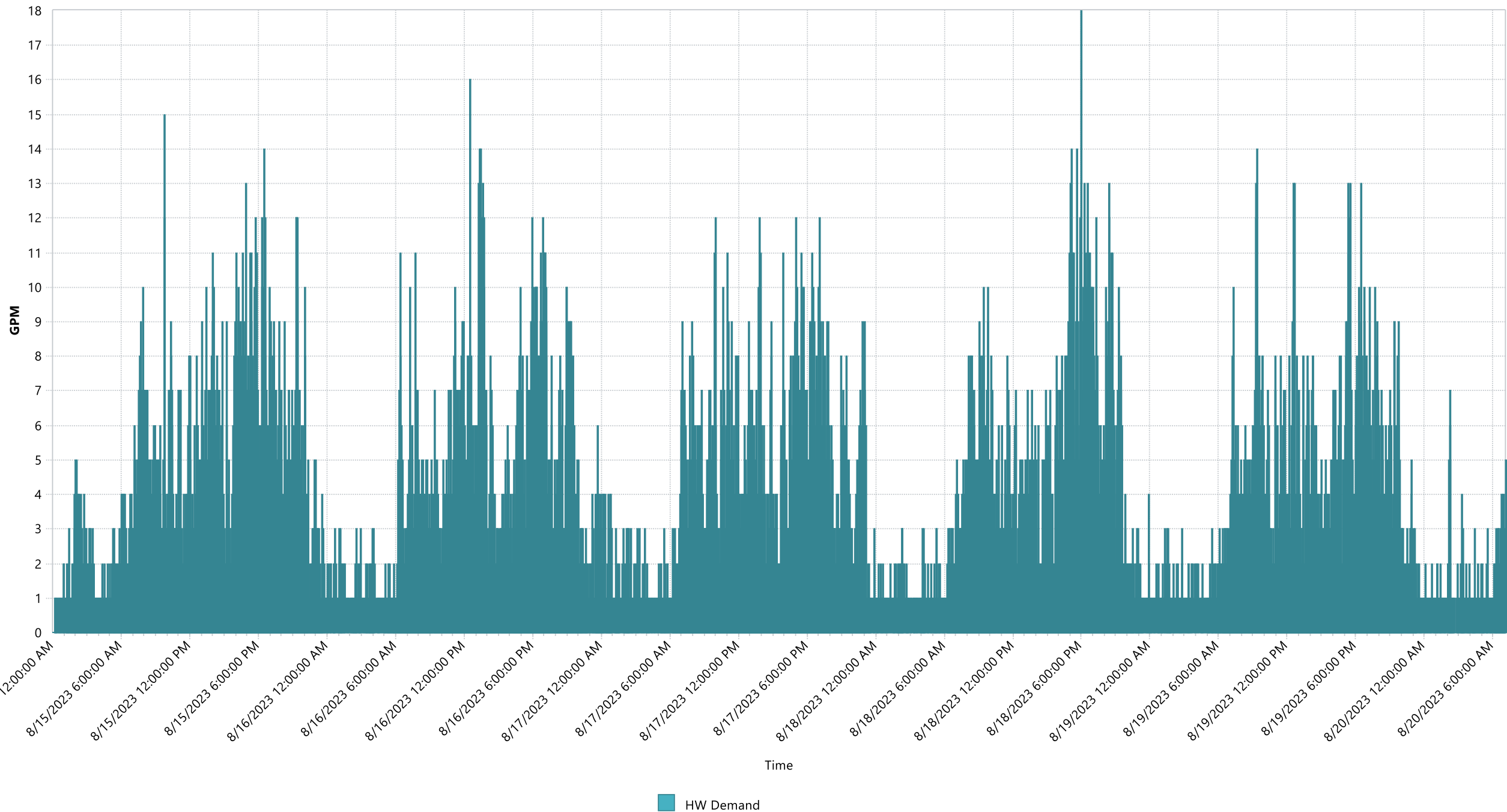
# Performance Data



# San Francisco 1

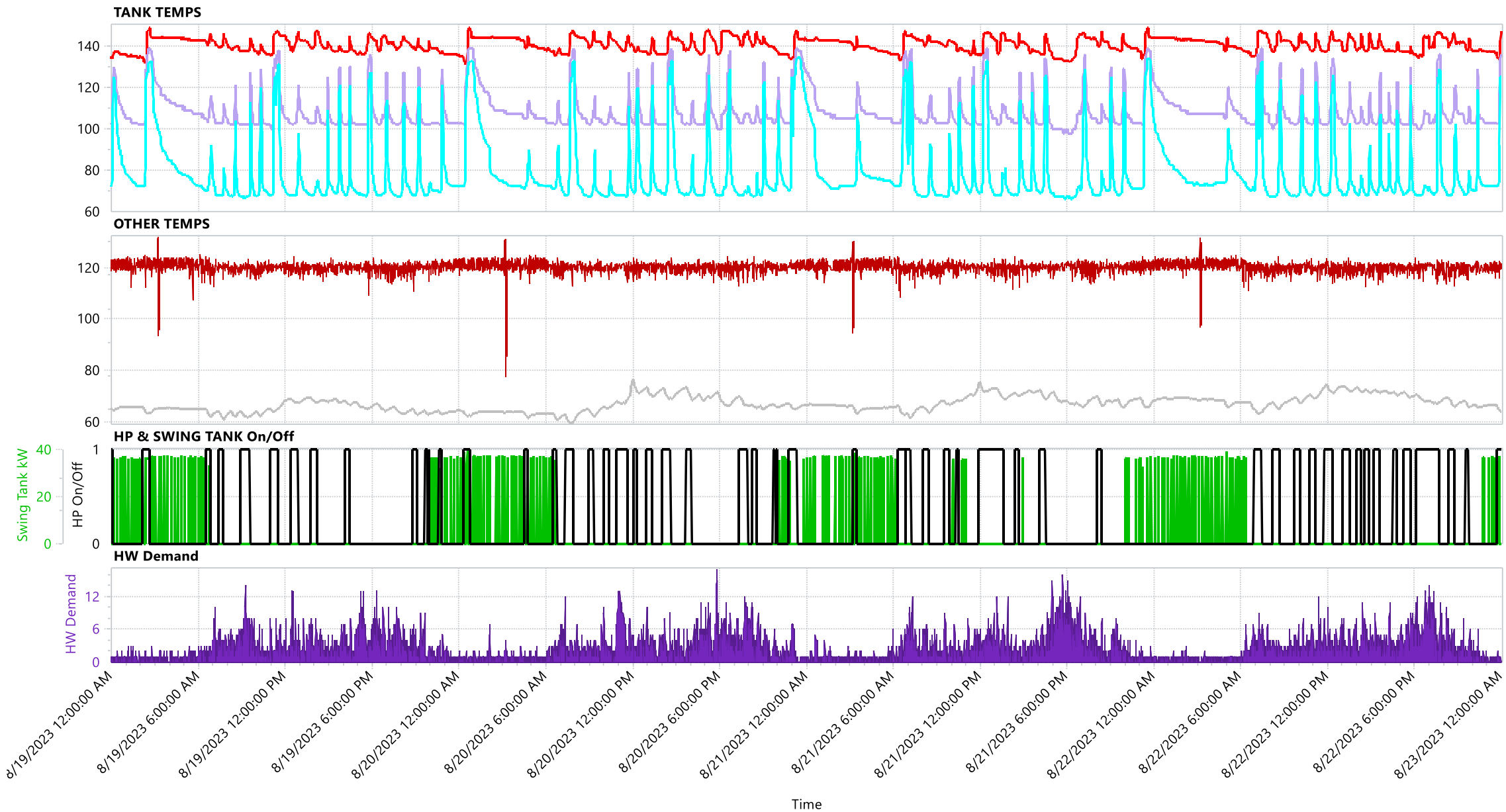


# HW Demand Profile (GPM)



HW Demand

# PLANT OPERATION



--- HPWH1\_OAT\_Temp F

— ST1\_TH17\_Bottom\_Temp F

— ST2\_TH16\_Middle\_Calc\_Temp F

— ST3\_TH15\_Top\_Temp F

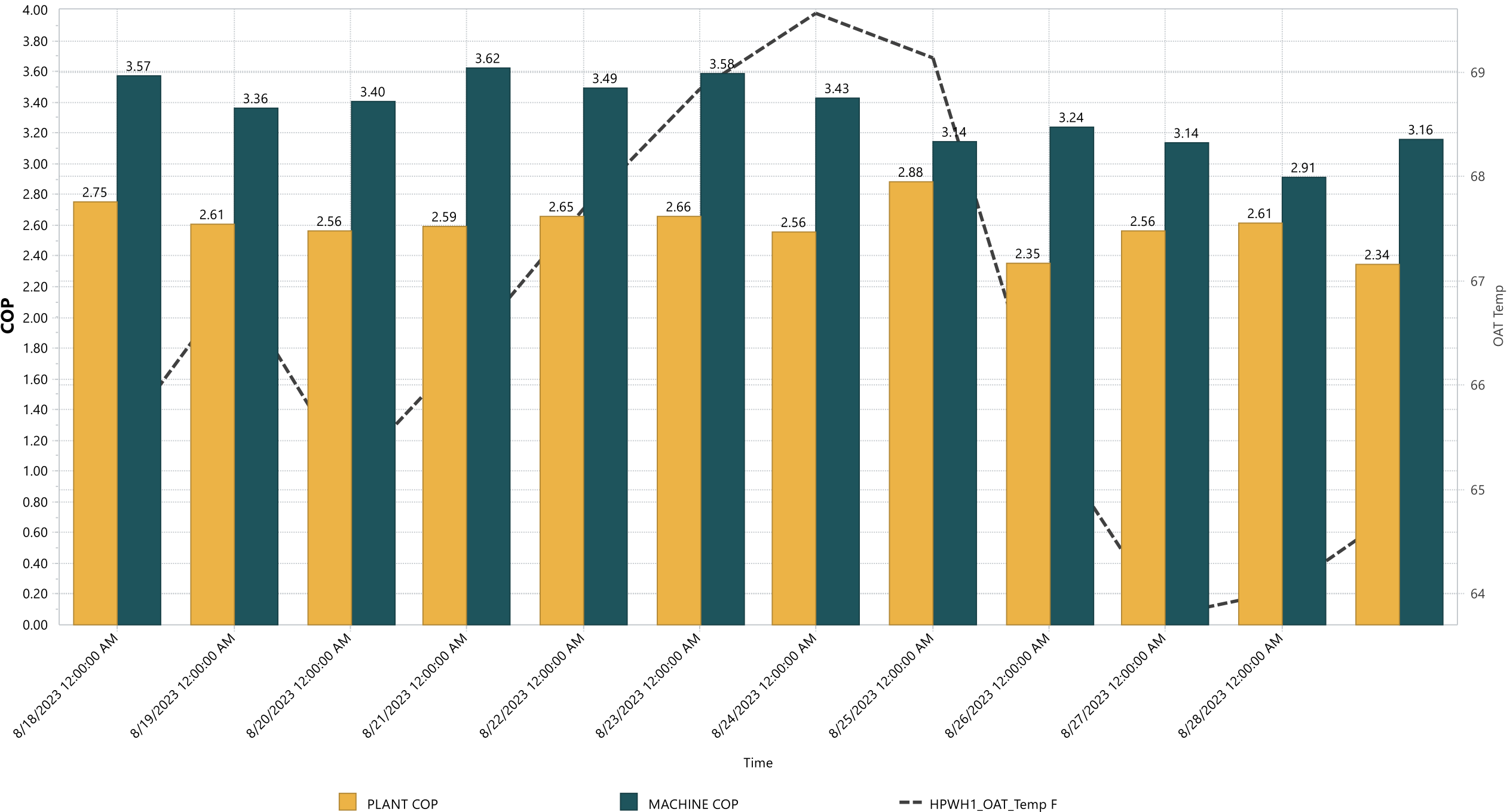
— PCon\_HeatPumpOnOffStatus\_Master

■ HW Demand

— MXV\_MixedOutlet\_Temp F

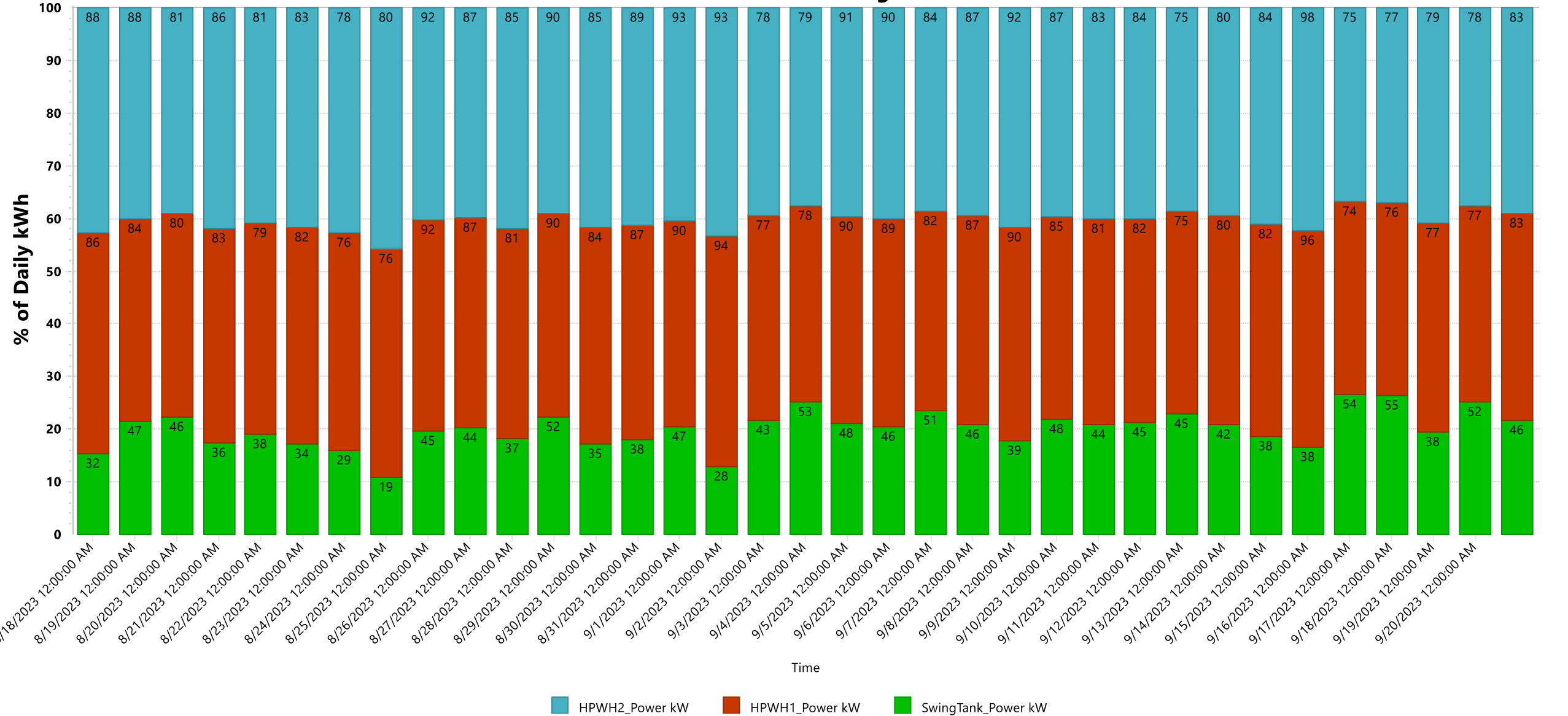
— SwingTank\_Power kW

# DAILY PLANT & MACHINE COP





# DAILY kWh Usage



# What's next for these projects?

- Construction completion and startup
- Ongoing commissioning
- Data collection and testing
  - Load shifting – CTA 2045
  - Recirc return locations
  - Low-speed / low-dB operation at night
- Recommendations to manufacturers
  - Packaging of systems & components
  - System configurations
  - Contractor training
- Reporting

Learning the hard way



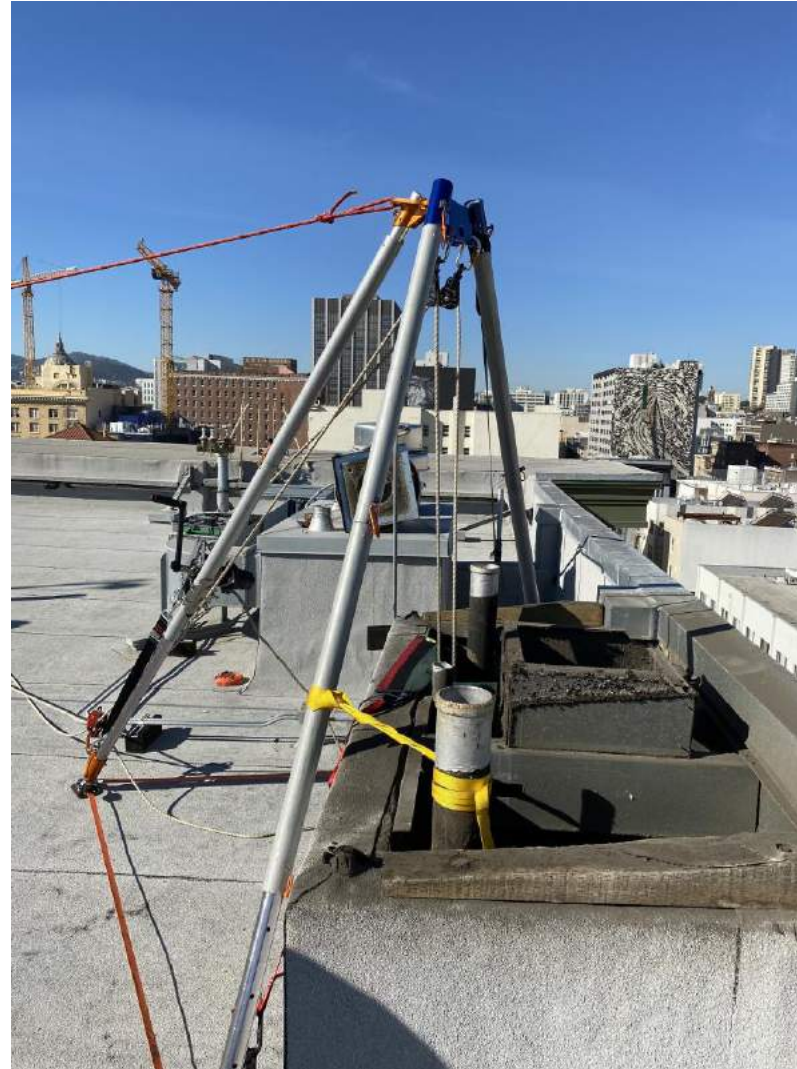
# What we've learned so far

- **Deploy flow meters on existing system to avoid oversizing HPWH plant**
  - Can be the difference between a project penciling or not
  - Can be difficult to find enough straight pipe for flow meters
- **Size large equipment carefully!**
  - Limited options to choose higher capacity units were essential to comply with NYC Building Code and minimize on-site operator involvement



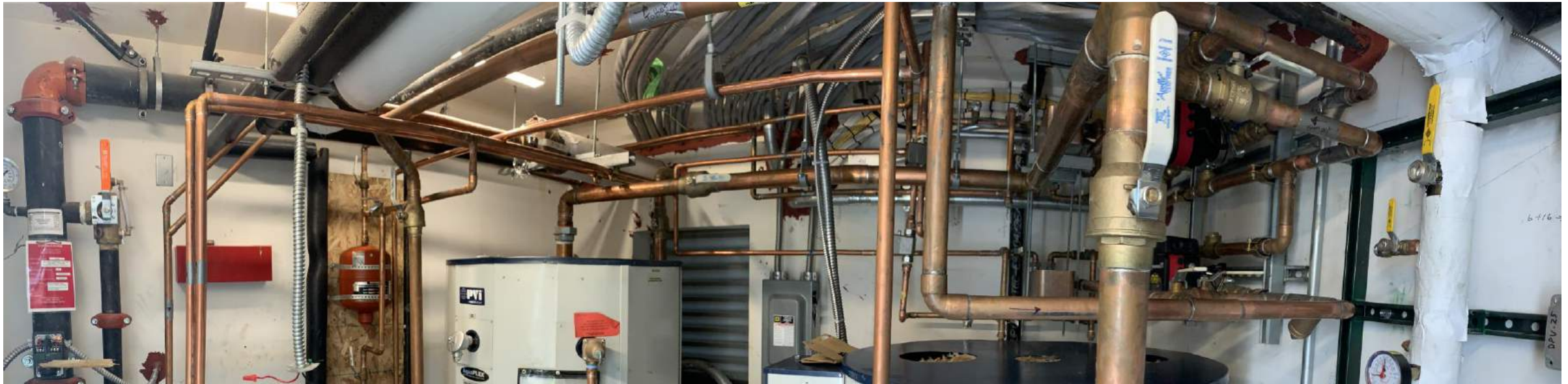
# What we've learned so far

- **Address recirculation losses & crossover before electrifying**
  - How much are recirc losses and how much can they be reduced?
  - Addressing recirc losses and crossover may be extremely labor intensive
  - We have seen buildings where recirculation is 60%+ of existing DHW load
  - **MUST** be addressed first to electrify cost-effectively!



# What we've learned so far

- **Space planning can be very hard.**
  - Securing outdoor space for unit installation presented a major challenge, particularly ensuring service clearances and tube-pull space for existing buildings.
  - May end up with tons of new equipment crammed into tiny spaces.



# What we've learned so far

- **Existing structural capacity will constrain installation locations**
  - The weight of large HPWH units often strain existing building structures.
  - Avoiding rooftop installations is usually necessary to prevent overloading or major structural upgrades that would drastically increase project costs.



# What we've learned so far

- **Cold weather complicates HPWH design.**
  - Must be careful when selecting equipment to use rated capacity at local design conditions.
  - Provide adequate provisions for freeze protection such as glycol, heat trace, or both to prevent freezing of pipes.
  - Does a system allow for drain-back of water during a power outage?
- **Try to avoid putting air-source HPWH inside.**
  - Installing Air-to-Water Heat Pumps in indoor mechanical rooms is problematic:
    - How to handle exhaust/discharge of cold air?
    - How to ensure tempered make-up air to prevent potential pipe freezing due to frigid winter air influx?
  - Best to locate air-source HPWH outside



# What we've learned so far

- **Code was not written for HPWH.**
  - Complying with minimum clearance requirements per code (e.g., 8ft from the property line) presented regulatory challenges.
- **Large heat pumps are not silent**
  - Ground installation of large equipment with high dBA rating can pose issues if AHJ has noise ordinance, or cause resident complaints
- **Plumbers are not HVAC contractors**
  - Plumbers are used to thermistors & aquastats, not complex BMS-level controls
  - Complex HVAC-level controls not a good fit for plumbers to install

# There are more ...

- Challenges in Retrofitting with Existing DHW Systems
- Limited Pool of Experienced Plumbing Contractors
- Electrical Service Capacity Limitations
- Electrical End Box Challenges
- Protection from Tenant Waste
- Coordination with Utility Companies
- Weather-Resilient Design
- Booster Installation Challenges
- Lead Time Impact
- In-Unit Access Coordination:
- Cost Justification Challenges
- Utility Upgrade Inconvenience
- Change Order Complexity

# Thank You!

**Nick Young**

[nyoung@aeacleanenergy.org](mailto:nyoung@aeacleanenergy.org)

**El Hadji Niang**

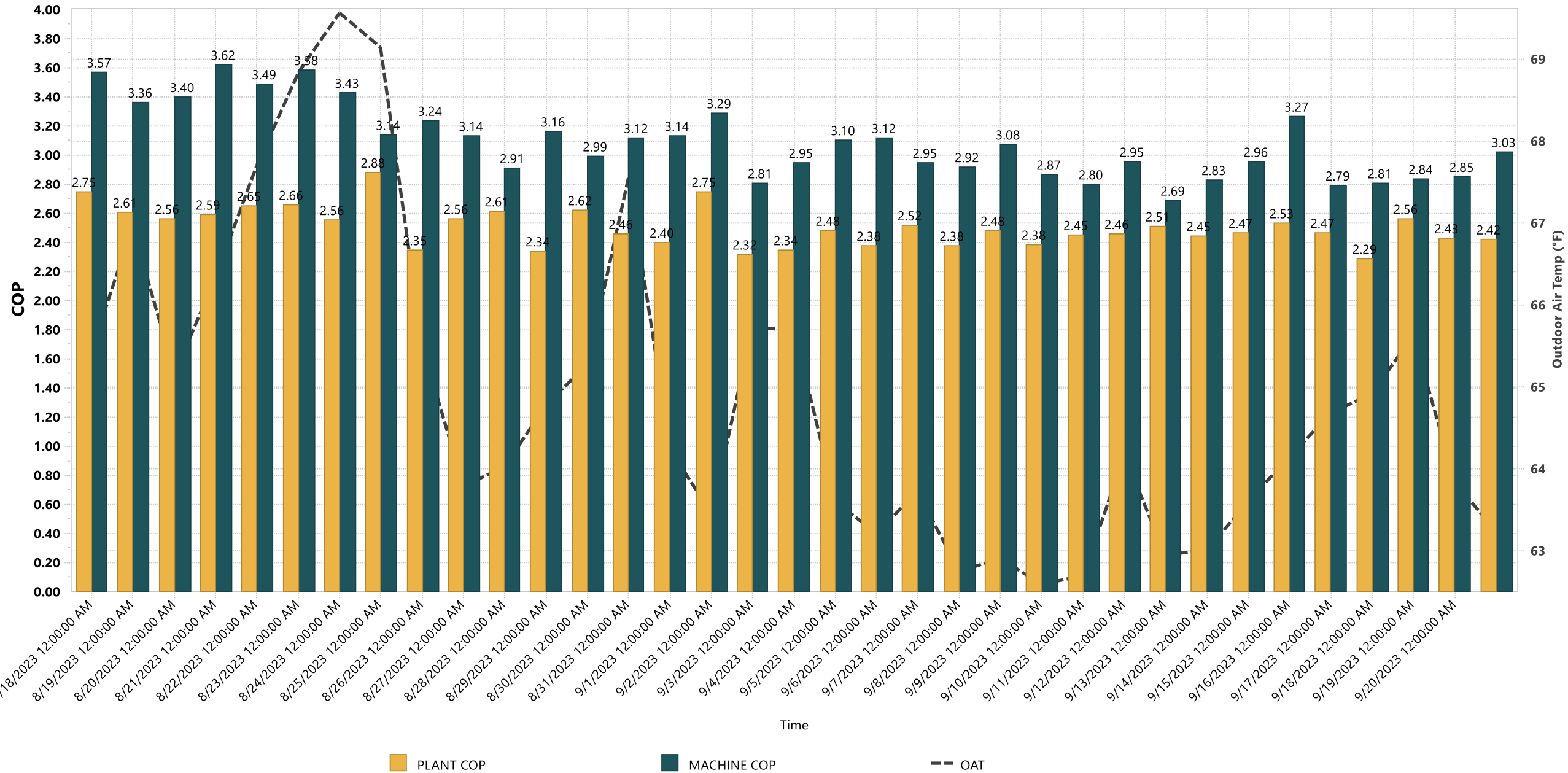
[eniang@aeacleanenergy.org](mailto:eniang@aeacleanenergy.org)



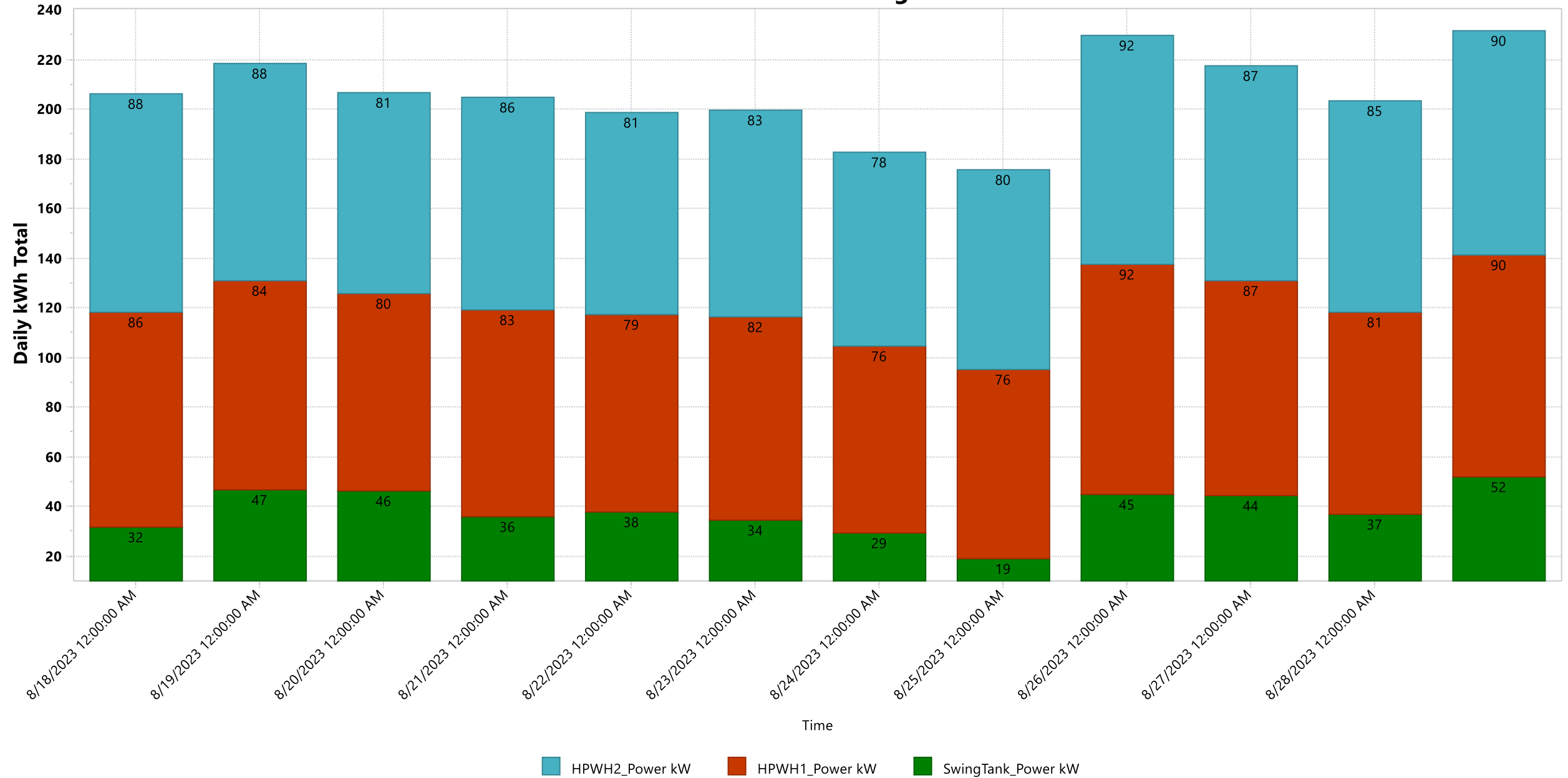
# Data Appendix



# DAILY PLANT & MACHINE COP



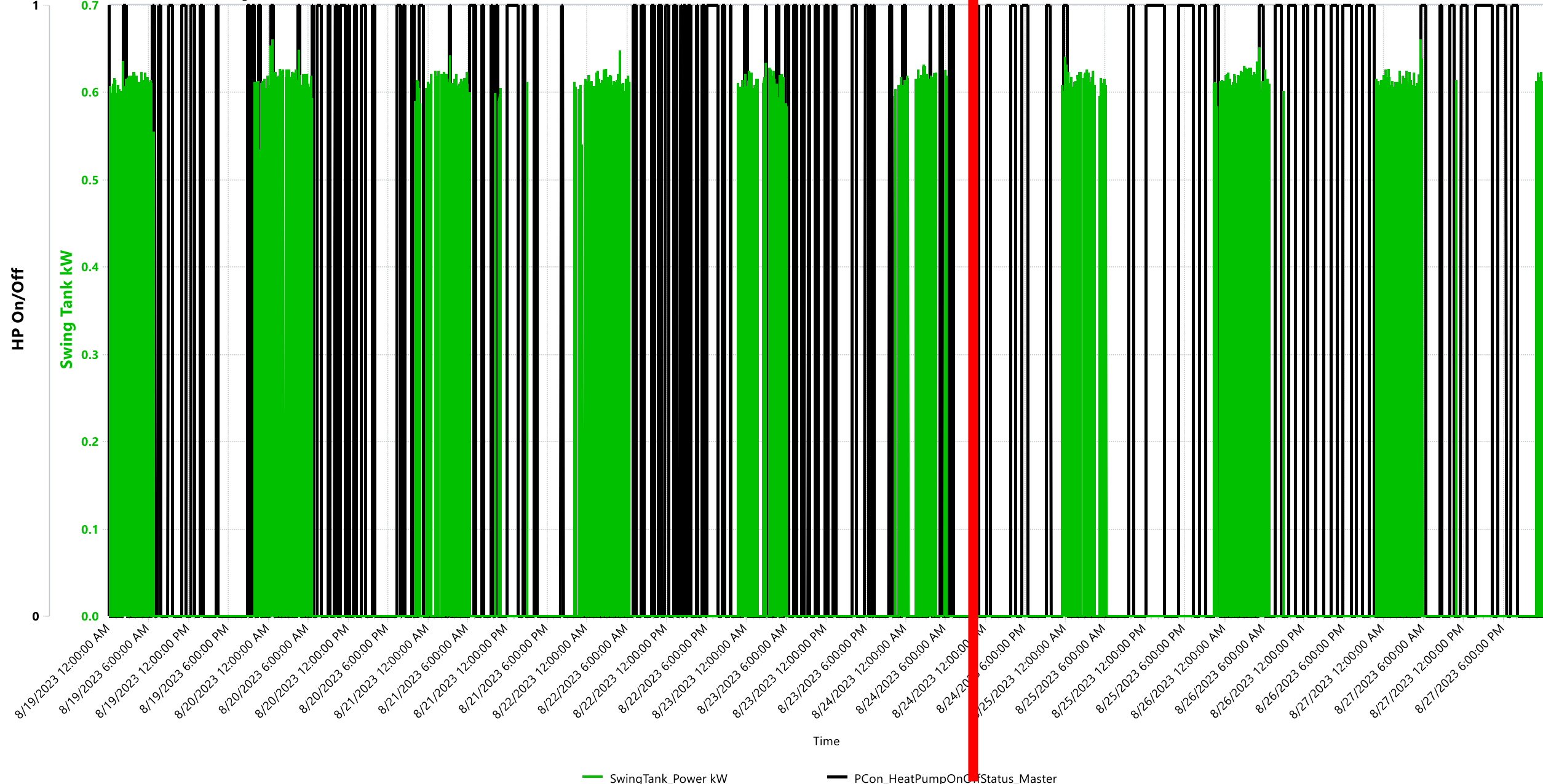
# DAILY kWh Usage



# Thermo On/Off Change Made 8/24

**CHANGE MADE HERE**

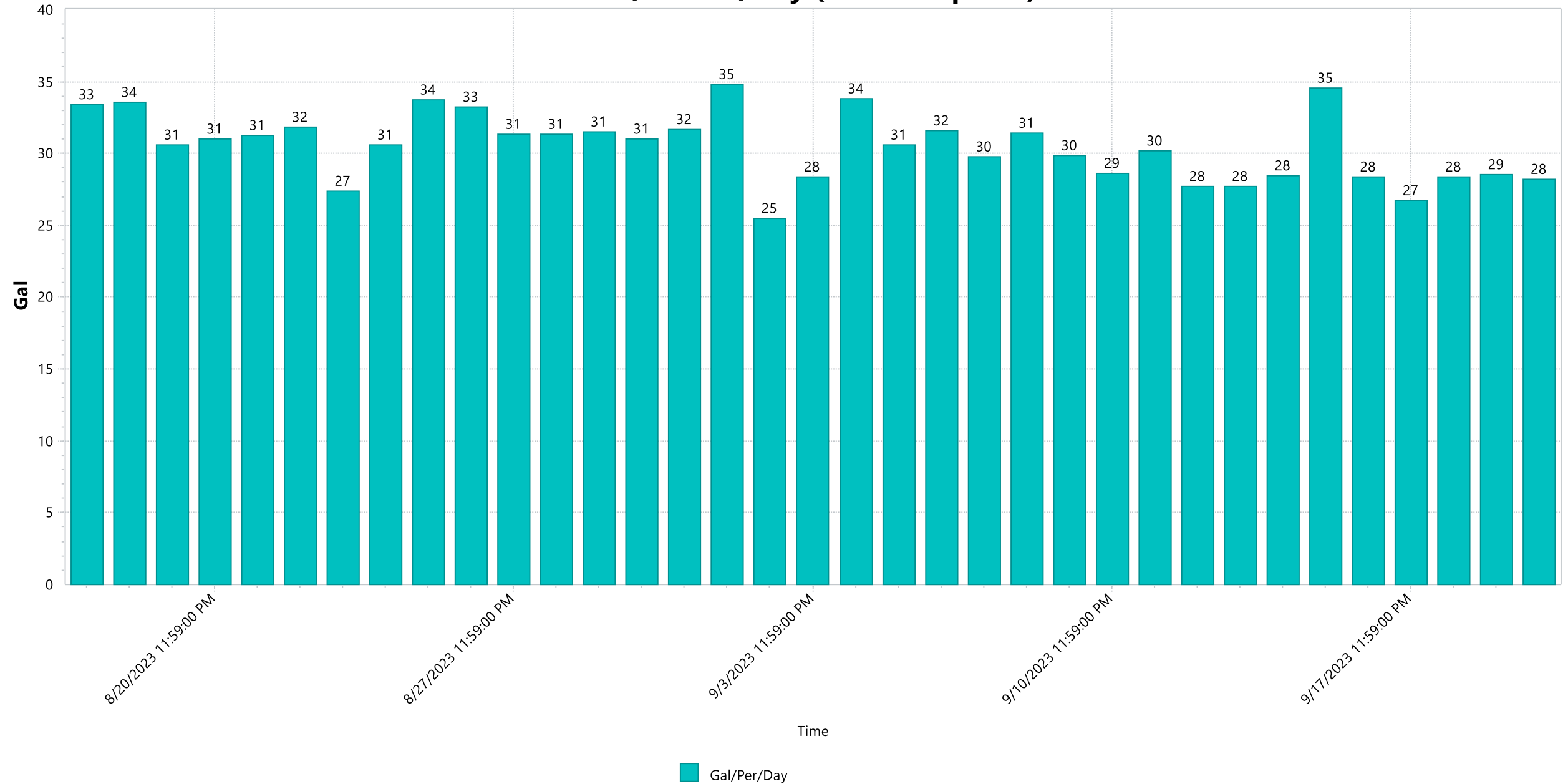
Pre/Post Control Change



SwingTank\_Power kW

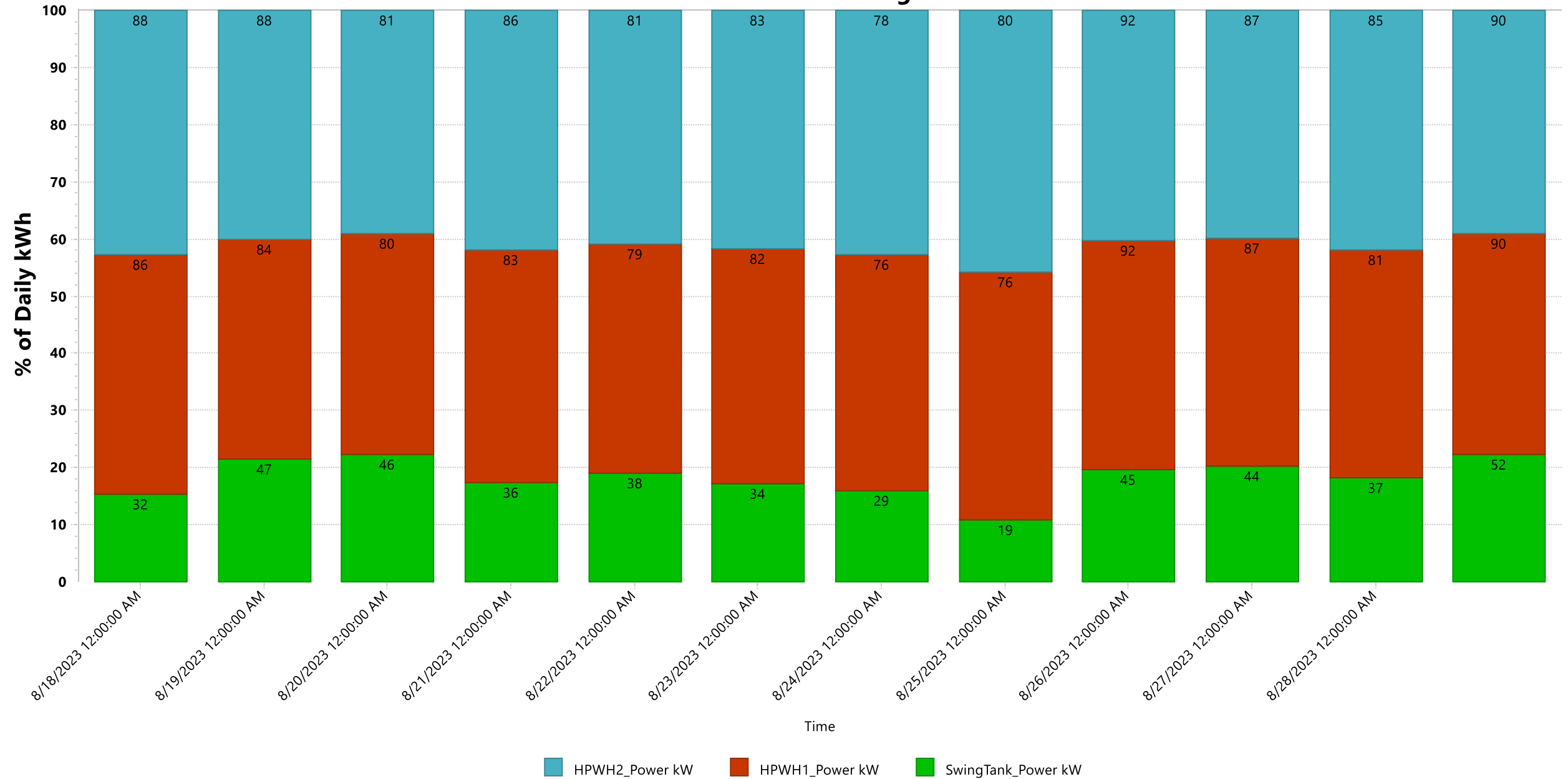
PCon\_HeatPumpOnOffStatus\_Master

# Gal/Person/Day (115 Occupants)

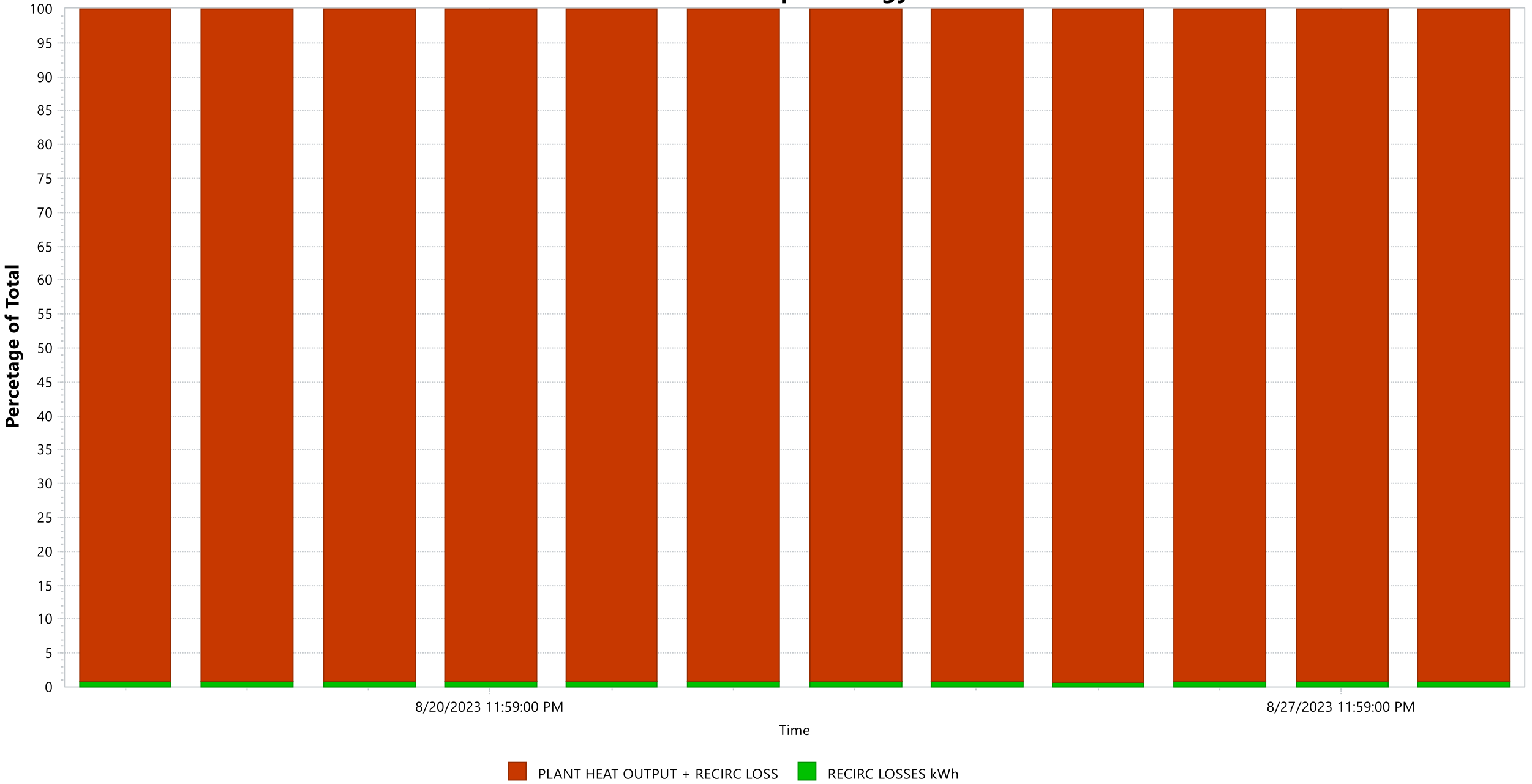




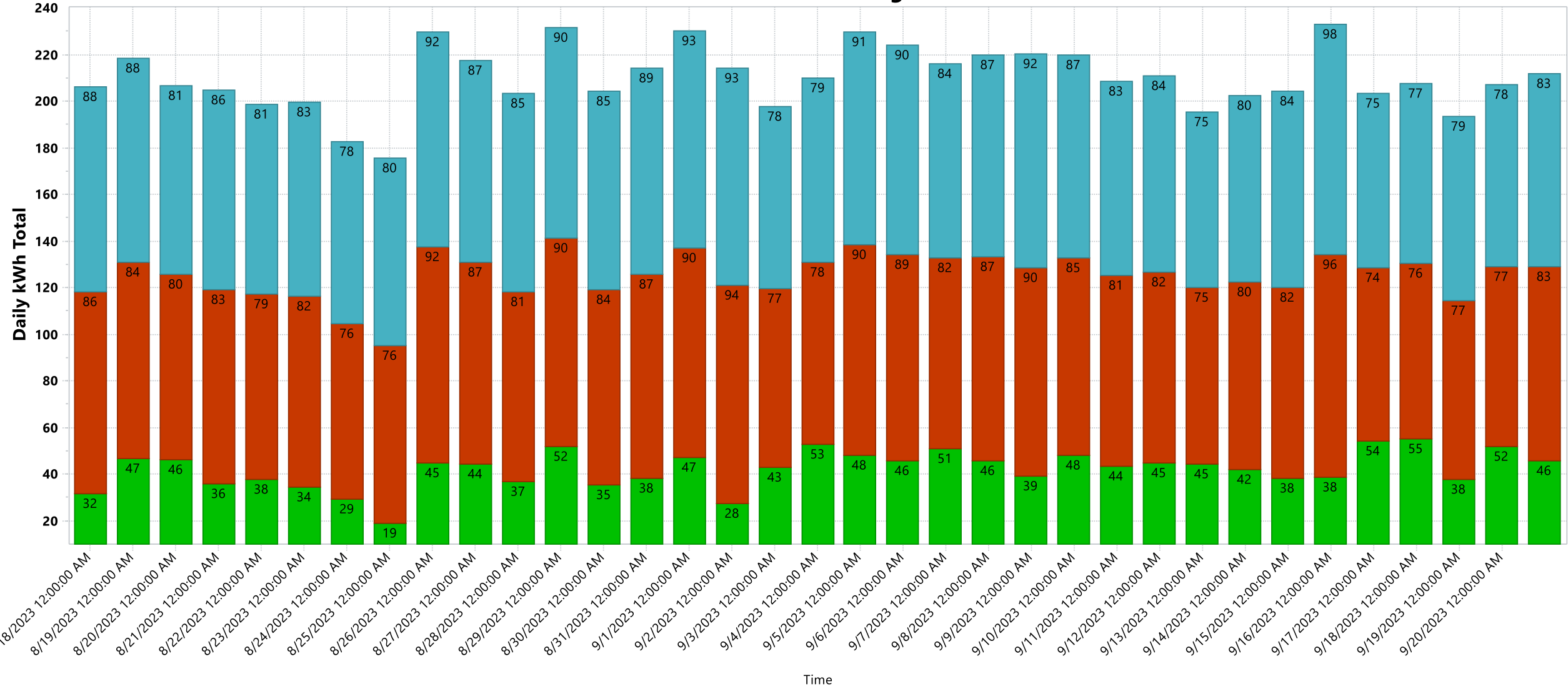
# DAILY kWh Usage



# % of Total Plant Heat Output Energy Vs. Recirc Losses

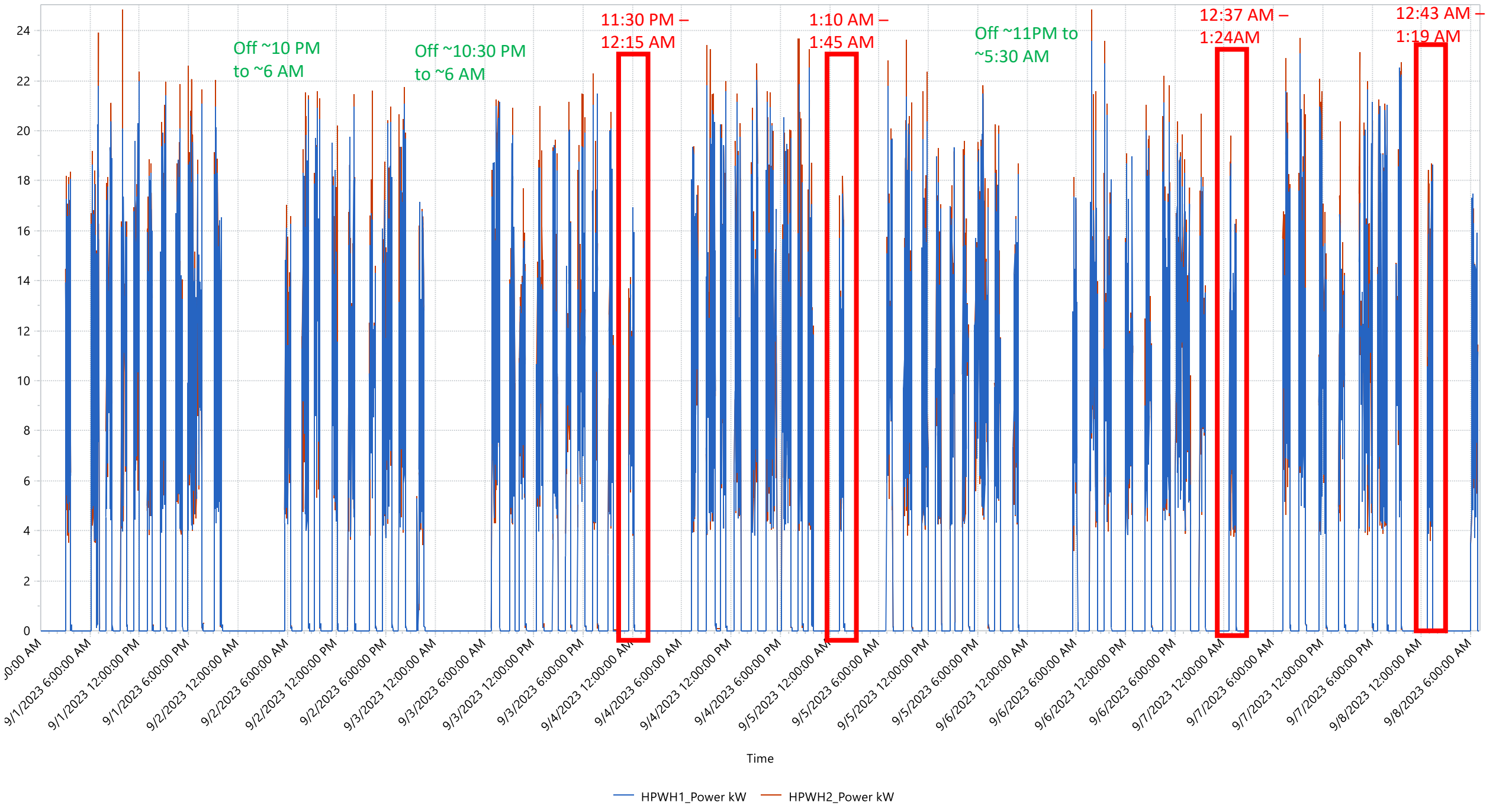


# DAILY kWh Usage

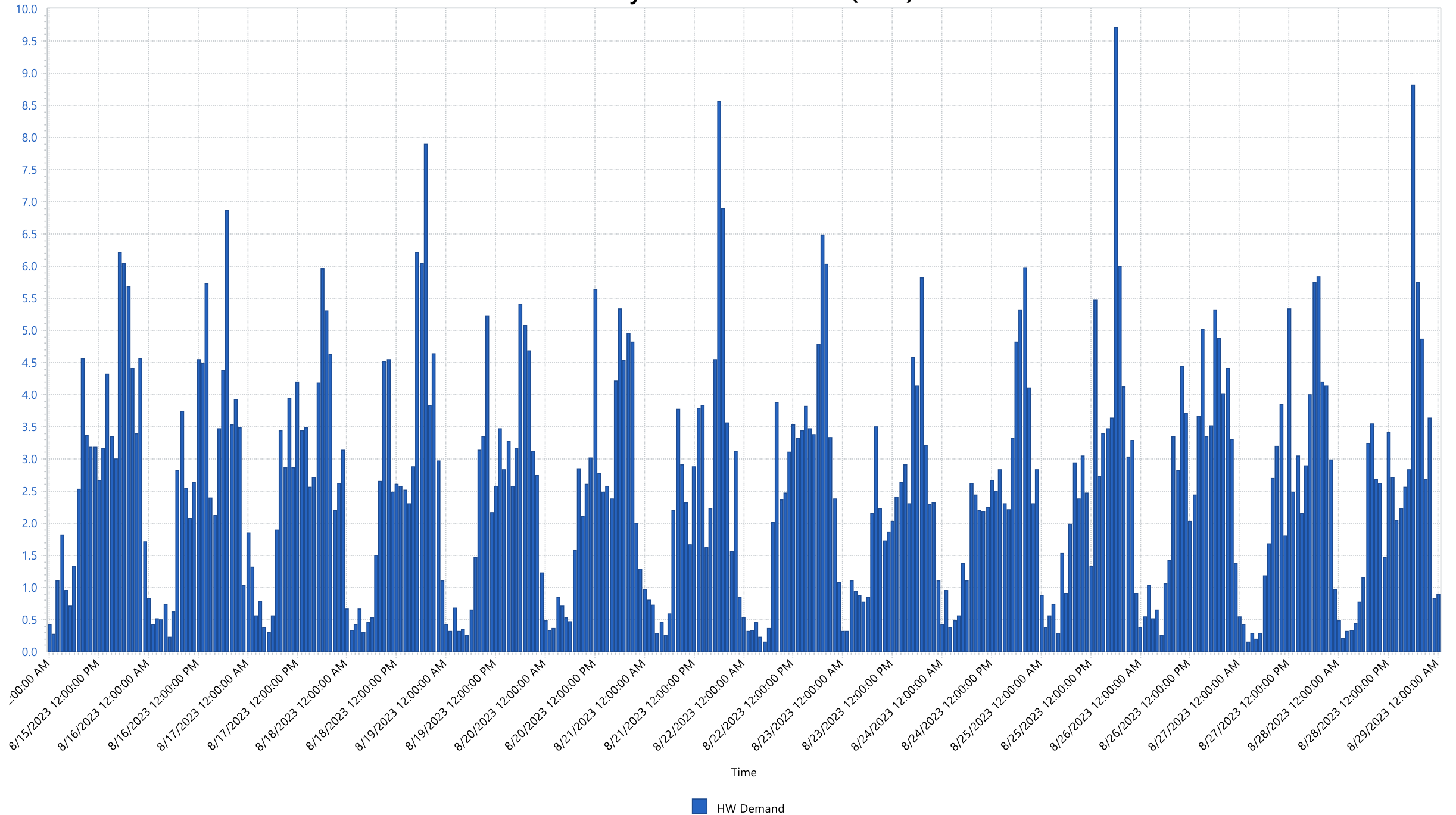


■ HPWH2\_Power kW    
 ■ HPWH1\_Power kW    
 ■ SwingTank\_Power kW

# HP Power (kW)

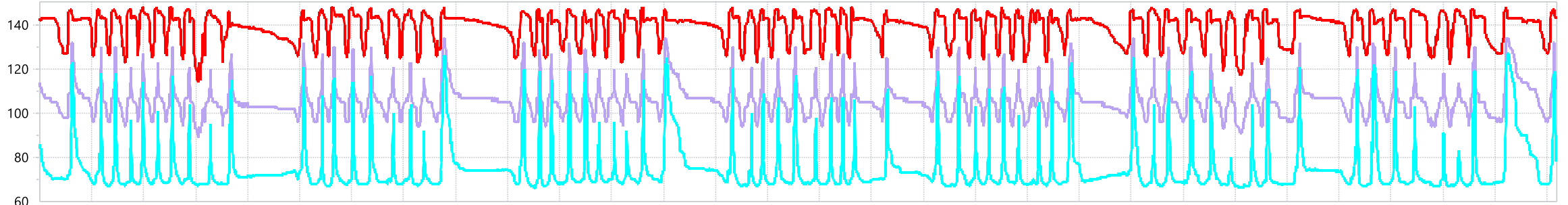


# Hourly HW Demand Profile (GPM)

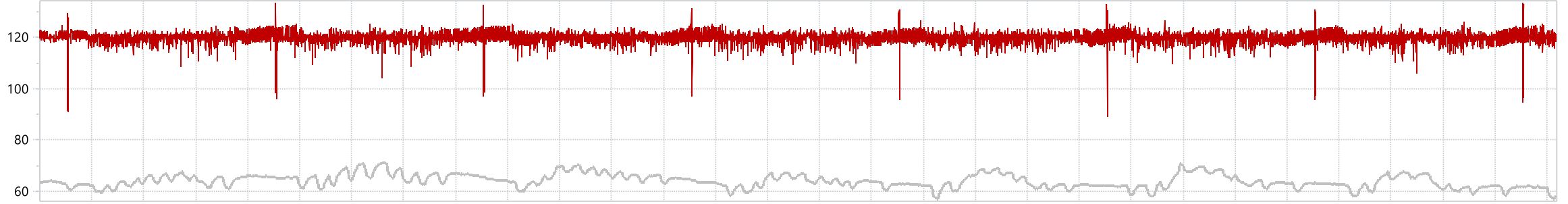


# PLANT OPERATION

### TANK TEMPS



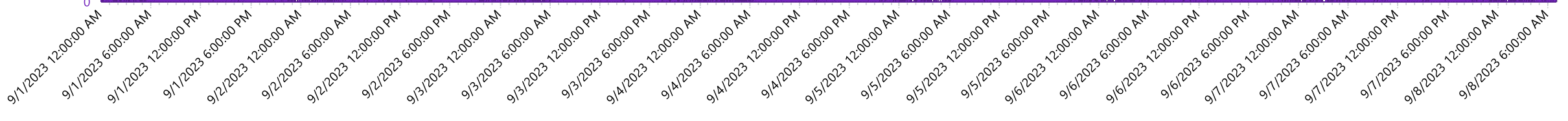
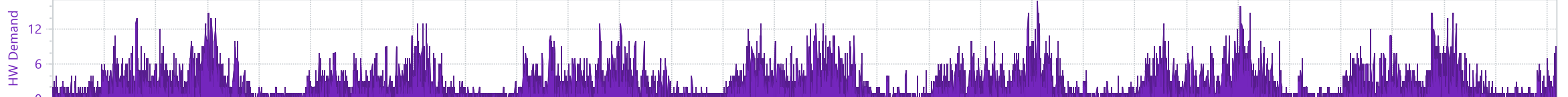
### OTHER TEMPS



### HP & SWING TANK On/Off



### HW Demand



Time

- HPWH1\_OAT\_Temp F
- ST1\_TH17\_Bottom\_Temp F
- ST2\_TH16\_Middle\_Calc\_Temp F
- ST3\_TH15\_Top\_Temp F
- PCon\_HeatPumpOnOffStatus\_Master
- HW Demand
- MXV\_MixedOutlet\_Temp F
- SwingTank\_Power kW

## Adjustment made to Sensor Strategy:

### Mode-1:

- Thermo-On at sensor 1 (cold tank)
- Thermo-Off at sensor-2 (middle tank).

### Mode-2:

- Thermo-On at Sensor-2
- Thermo-Off and Sensor-2.

Use Mode-2 as the load up and Mode-1 as Normal operation.

Looking at 3 days before and 3 days after

**BEFORE**

#### Runtime 0001

Channel Name: PCon\_HeatPumpOnOffStatus\_Master

Number of DataPoints: 2882

Minimum Value: 0

Maximum Value: 1

Average Value: 0.23

	Minimum	Maximum	Count	MinimumValue	MaximumValue	AverageValue	RunTimeHours	%RunTime	ActualEnergy	NumberOfCycles	AverageCyclesPerHour
<b>OFF</b>	.1	0	2223	0	0	0	37.05	77.13	0	0	0
<b>ON</b>	.1	1	659	1	1	1	10.98	22.87	10.98	28	2.55

**AFTER**

#### Runtime 0001

Channel Name: PCon\_HeatPumpOnOffStatus\_Master

Number of DataPoints: 4321

Minimum Value: 0

Maximum Value: 1

Average Value: 0.32

	Minimum	Maximum	Count	MinimumValue	MaximumValue	AverageValue	RunTimeHours	%RunTime	ActualEnergy	NumberOfCycles	AverageCyclesPerHour
<b>OFF</b>	1	0	2931	0	0	0	48.85	67.83	0	0	0
<b>ON</b>	.1	1	1390	1	1	1	23.17	32.17	23.17	21	0.91

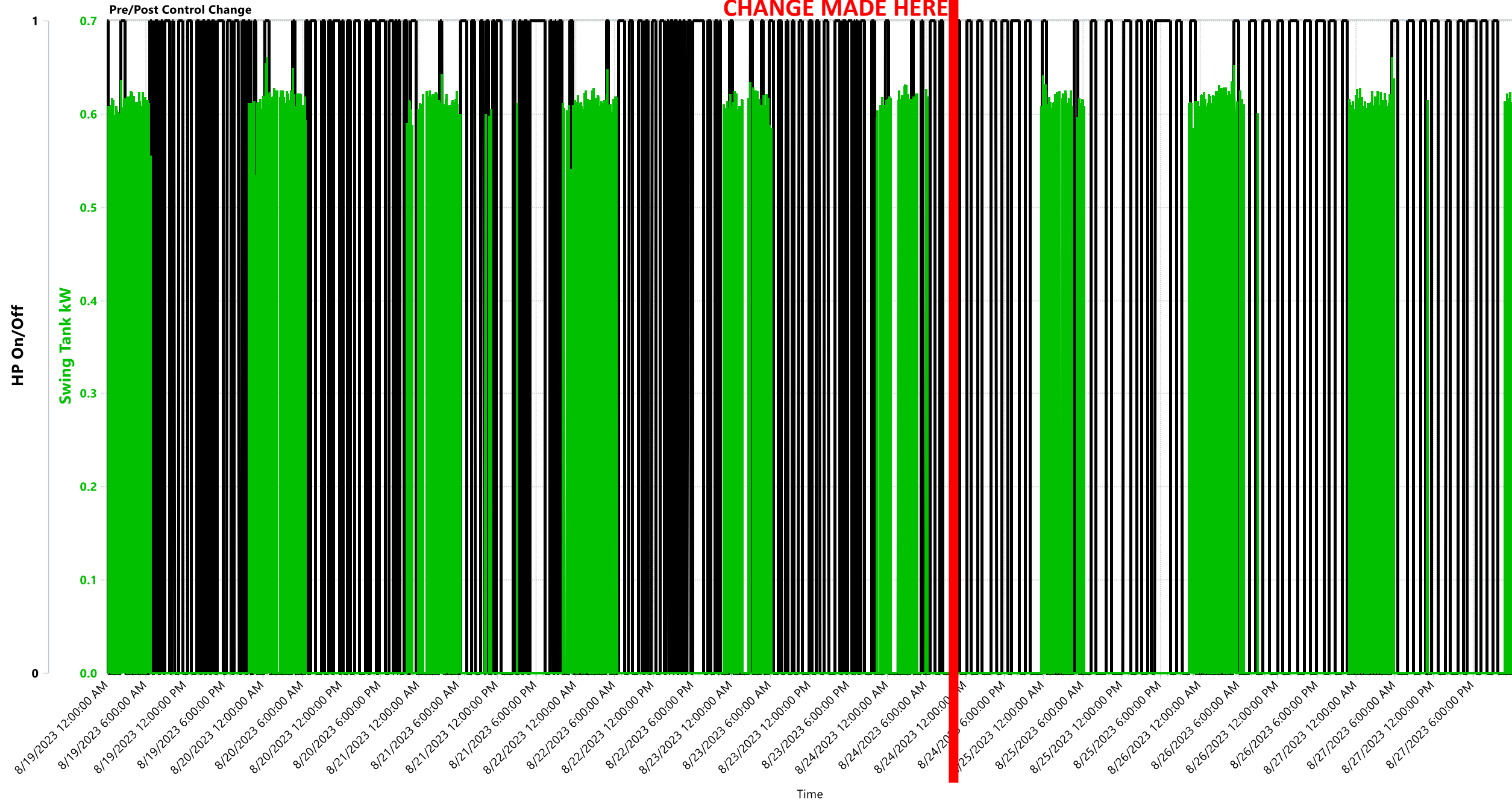
Looking at single day before and after:

8/19: Ran for 4.5 hours, cycled 12 times

8/27: Ran for 7.5 hours, cycled 7 times

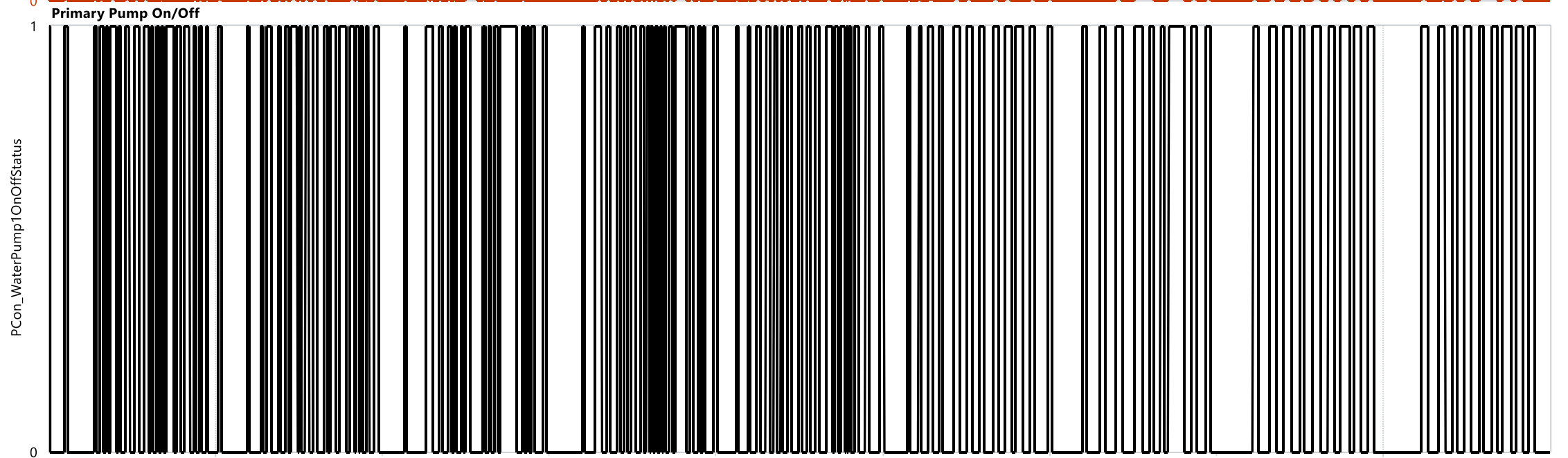
# Thermo On/Off Change Made 8/24

**CHANGE MADE HERE**





# Primary Pump Vs. HP On/Off



8/20/2023 12:00:00 AM

Time

8/27/2023 12:00:00 AM