



# Zeroing in on Compressed Air

**Niels Broers**

Specialist Engineer, BC Hydro

**Shane Simard**

Sales, Service, and Energy Manager, Compressor Division, Skeans

# Why Compressed Air?



Convenient  
Easily stored



Used inappropriately  
Consumer of electricity



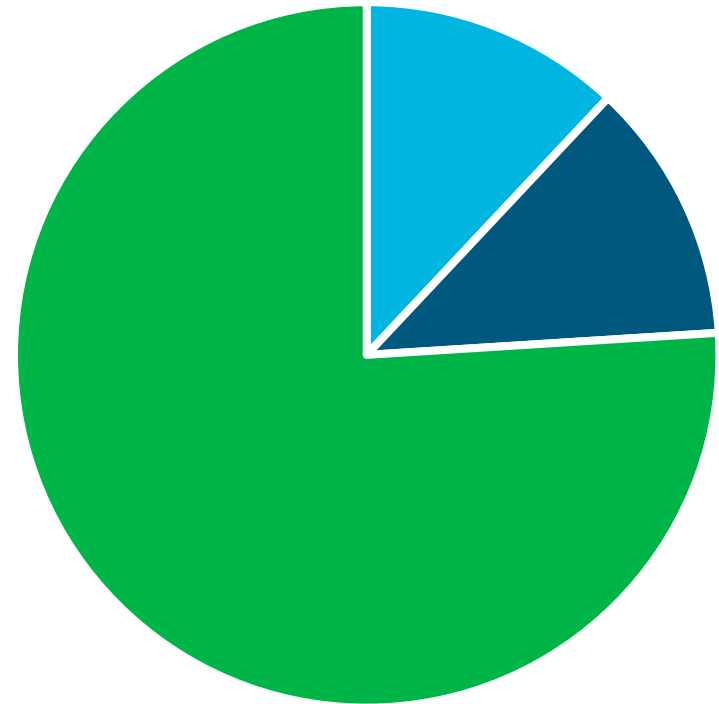
Opportunity for savings



# The Cost of Compressed Air

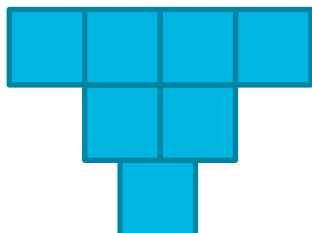
## Did you know?

The cost of electricity to run a 200hp air compressor for 15 years can total **\$1,000,000!** That is approximately \$70,000 per year.



**Electricity is 76% of compressed air costs**

# Single Stage Air Compression

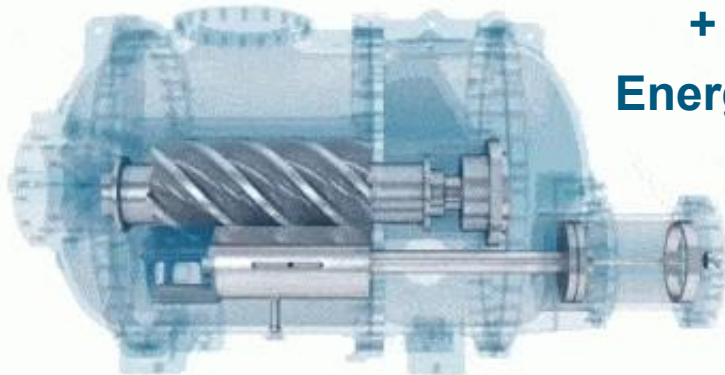


7 volumes of air at  
atmospheric pressure

Air compressor

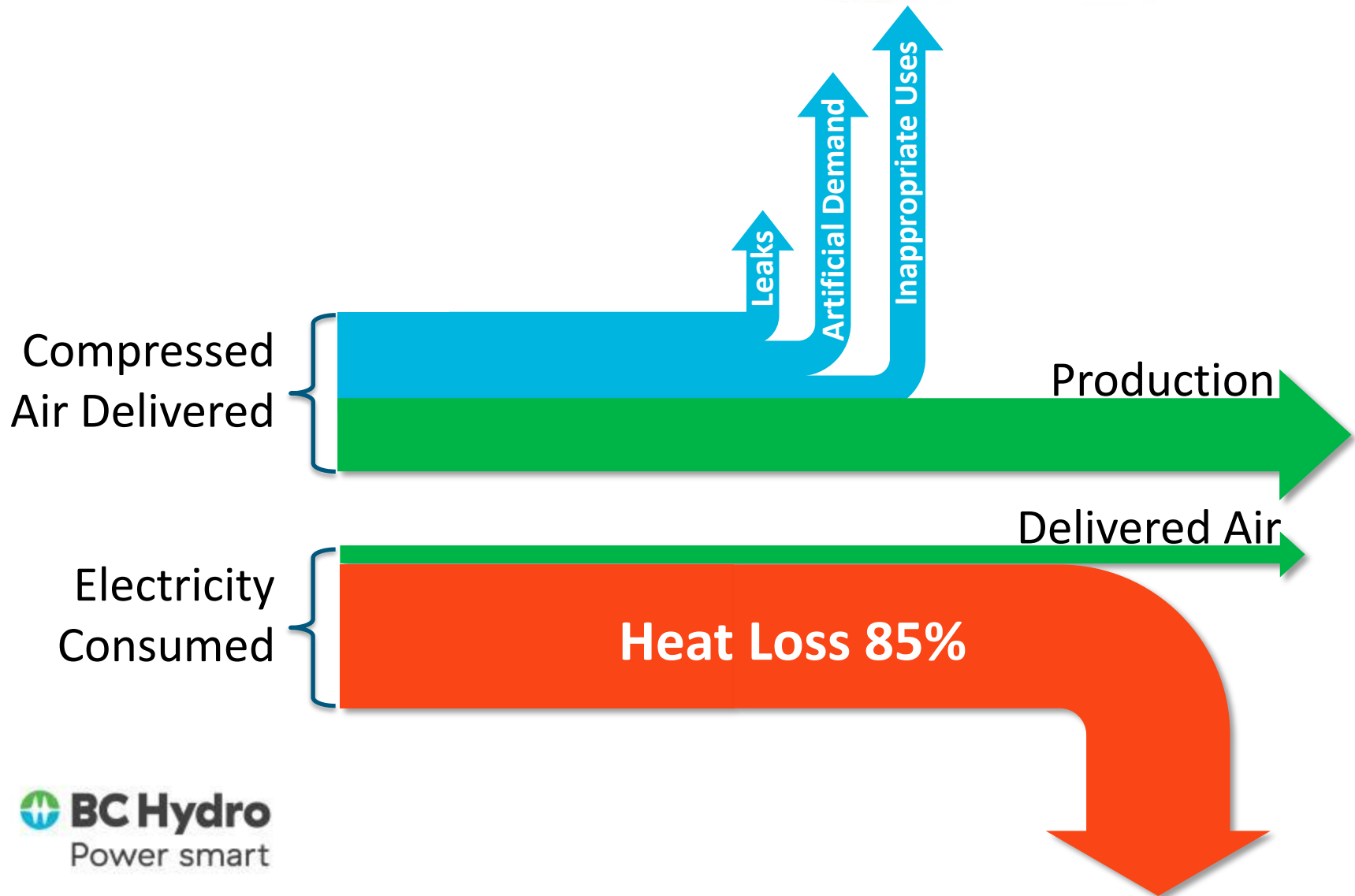
+

Energy



1 volume of air at 7x  
atmospheric pressure

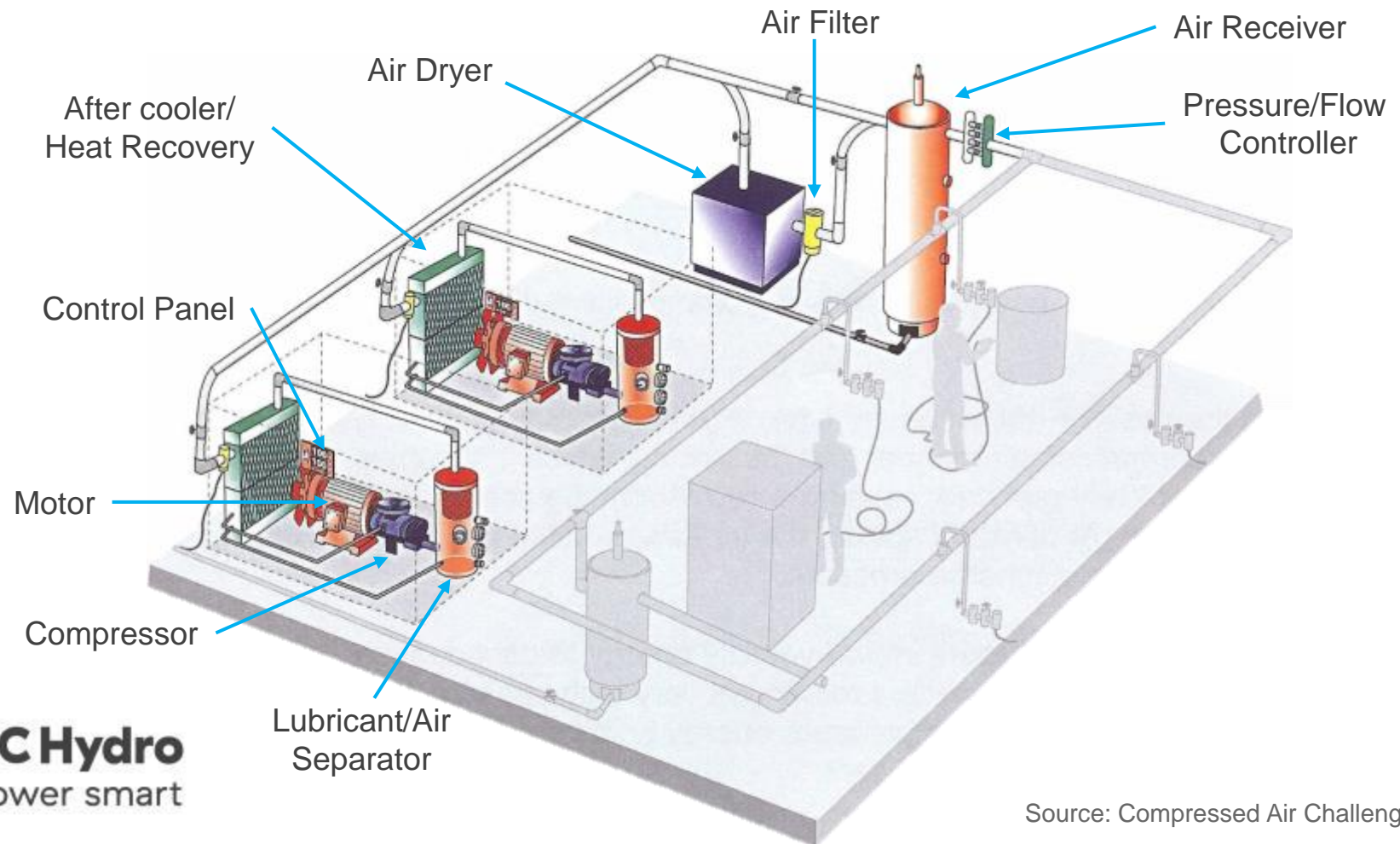
# Compressed Air Efficiency



# Compressed Air System – Supply Side

The supply side typically consists of:

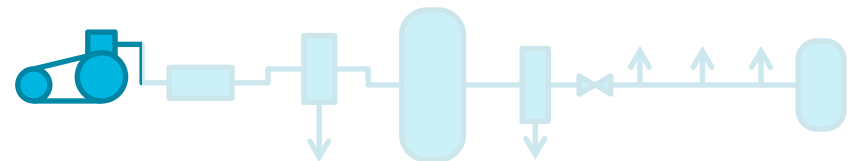
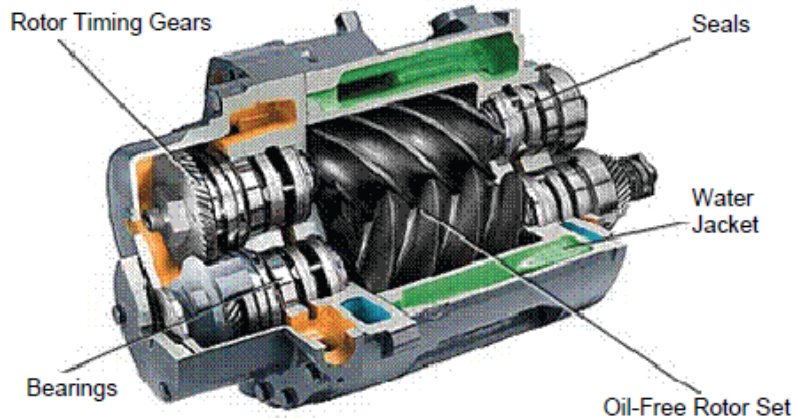
Air intake, compressor, motor, after cooler, controls, and treatment equipment and accessories.





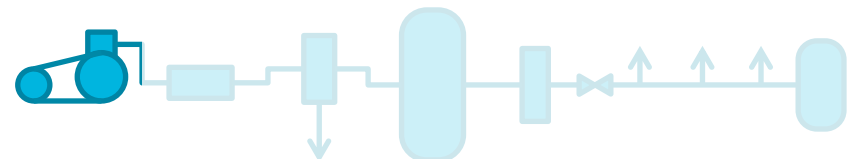
# Common Compressors

- Rotary
  - 5 to 900 HP
- Reciprocating
  - 1 to 30 HP



# Types of Compressor Controls

Load/Unload	Modulating	Variable Speed	Start/Stop
Continuous Operation	Restricts Inlet to Control Air Output	Adjusts Motor Speed to Control Output	Cycles On/Off to Control Output
Good Efficiency With Storage	Less Efficient at Part Load	Very Efficient at Part Load	Most Efficient for <30hp Compressors





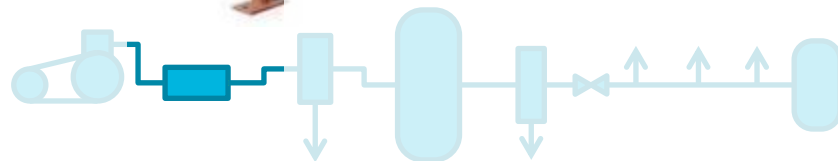
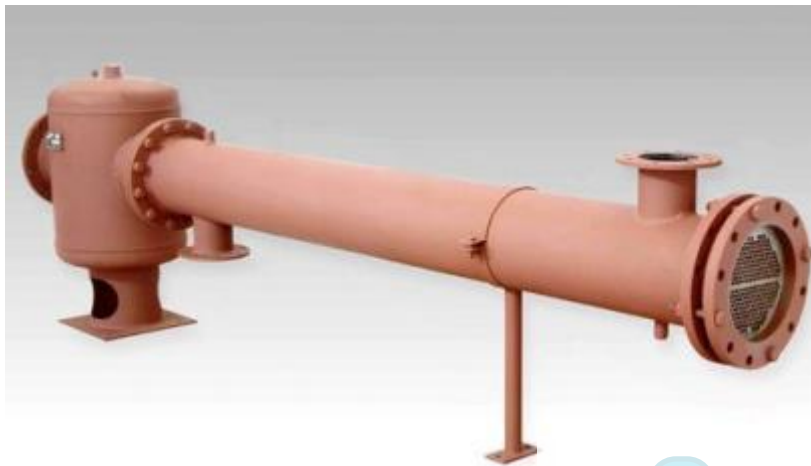
# Compressor Controls Performance

Load	Modulating	Load/Unload 1 gal/cfm Receiver	Load/Unload 10 gal/cfm Receiver	Variable Speed Drive
100%	\$21,680	\$21,680	\$21,680	\$22,110
75%	\$20,050	\$20,810	\$17,610	\$16,250
65%	\$19,400	\$19,940	\$16,690	\$14,090
50%	\$18,430	\$18,640	\$14,520	\$10,840
25%	\$16,800	\$14,960	\$10,080	\$5,420
10%	\$15,820	\$9,970	\$7,040	\$2,170

Based on \$0.06/kWh and 4,250hrs/year

# Air Compressor Coolers

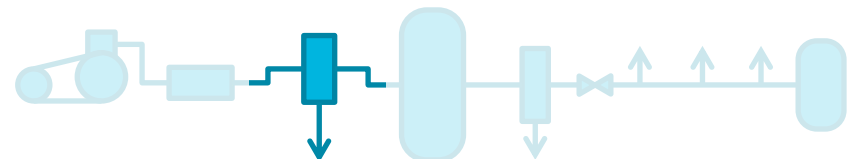
- Approximately 80% of the total energy input for a compressor is converted to heat.
  - Intercoolers are used to remove heat between multiple stages of compression
  - After coolers are used to remove heat from both compressor lubricant and discharge air.
  - *Heat recovery through heat exchangers is also an opportunity for greater energy efficiency.*



# Air Dryers

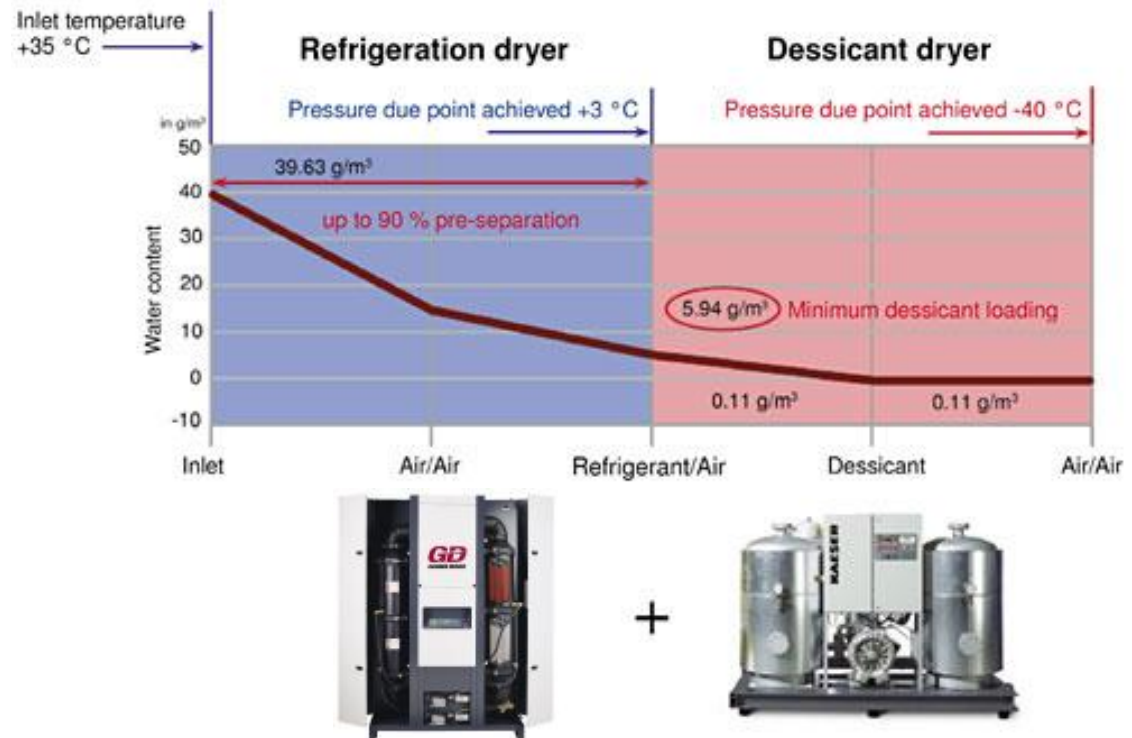
- Since compressed air is warmer than ambient air, condensation is created.
- Air dryers serve to remove moisture, oil and contaminants
- Typical pressure drop across dryer: 3 to 5psi
- Important to consider when evaluating the efficiency of a system
- Air should only be dried to the level required by the facility
- Dryers should be selected based on required pressure dew point

Type	Dew Point	Power Requirement (kW/100cfm)
Refrigerant	35 to 39°F	0.79
Desiccant (twin-tower)	-40°F	2.0 to 4.0
Deliquescent (single-tower)	15 to 50°F	0.2
Membrane	-40 to 40°F	3.0 to 4.0



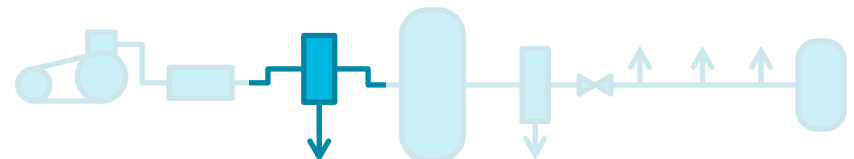
# Efficient Air Drying

Refrigeration Dryer Specific Power: 0.79 kW/100cfm  
Desiccant Dryer Specific Power: 2.0 to 4.0 kW/100cfm



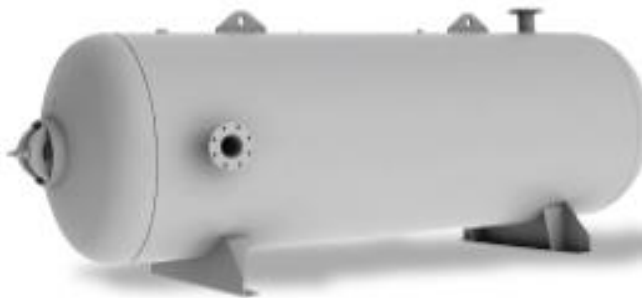
## Efficiency Measure:

- Cycle between Refrigerated and Desiccant Dryers based on Ambient Temperatures
- Combination of both dryers can achieve **savings of up to 67%**

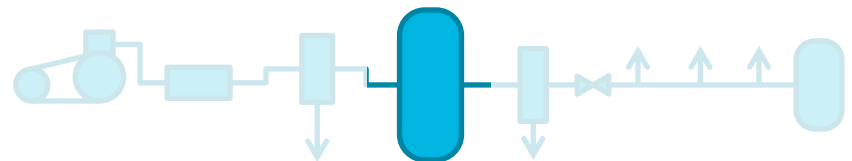


# Air Storage Receivers

An adequate sized storage tank in the system helps to maintain air quality, air system stability, and overall system efficiency.



Facilities with **large fluctuations** in demand or **insufficient air pressure** should consider one or more receivers in the distribution system to **eliminate high operating pressure** through false demand.





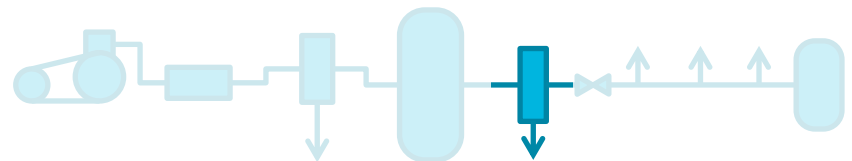
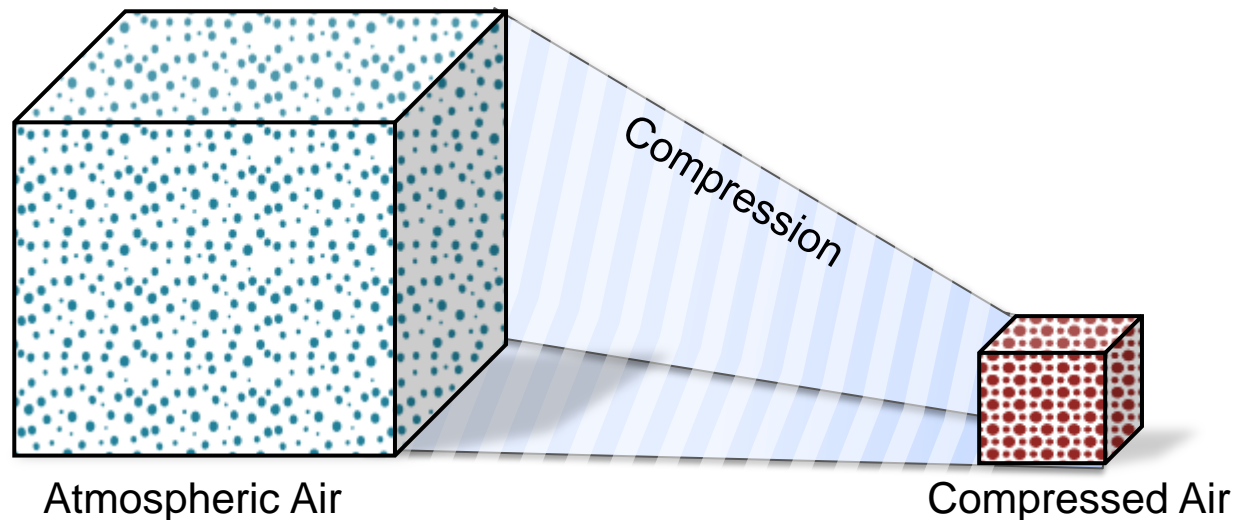


⚠ DANGER ⚠  
DO NOT ENTER  
NO ADMITTANCE



# Air Filters

- The Air Filters protect the compressor from atmospheric airborne particles as well as protect end use devices
  - Use a filter that is recommended by the manufacturer for the compressor and required by the end use.
  - *High differential pressure across the filter will result in an increase in energy consumption. Hence a fine filter will consume more energy than a coarse filter.*



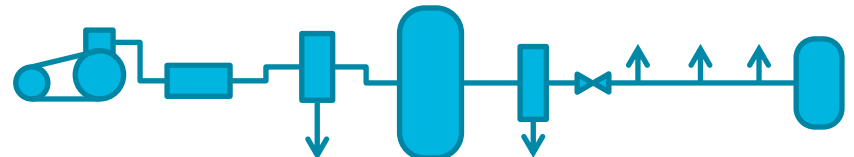
# Supply Side Improvement Opportunities

## Suggested Actions:

- Shut off compressors when not required
- Install or improve compressor controls
- Optimize air dryers and use dew point controls

## Suggested Actions:

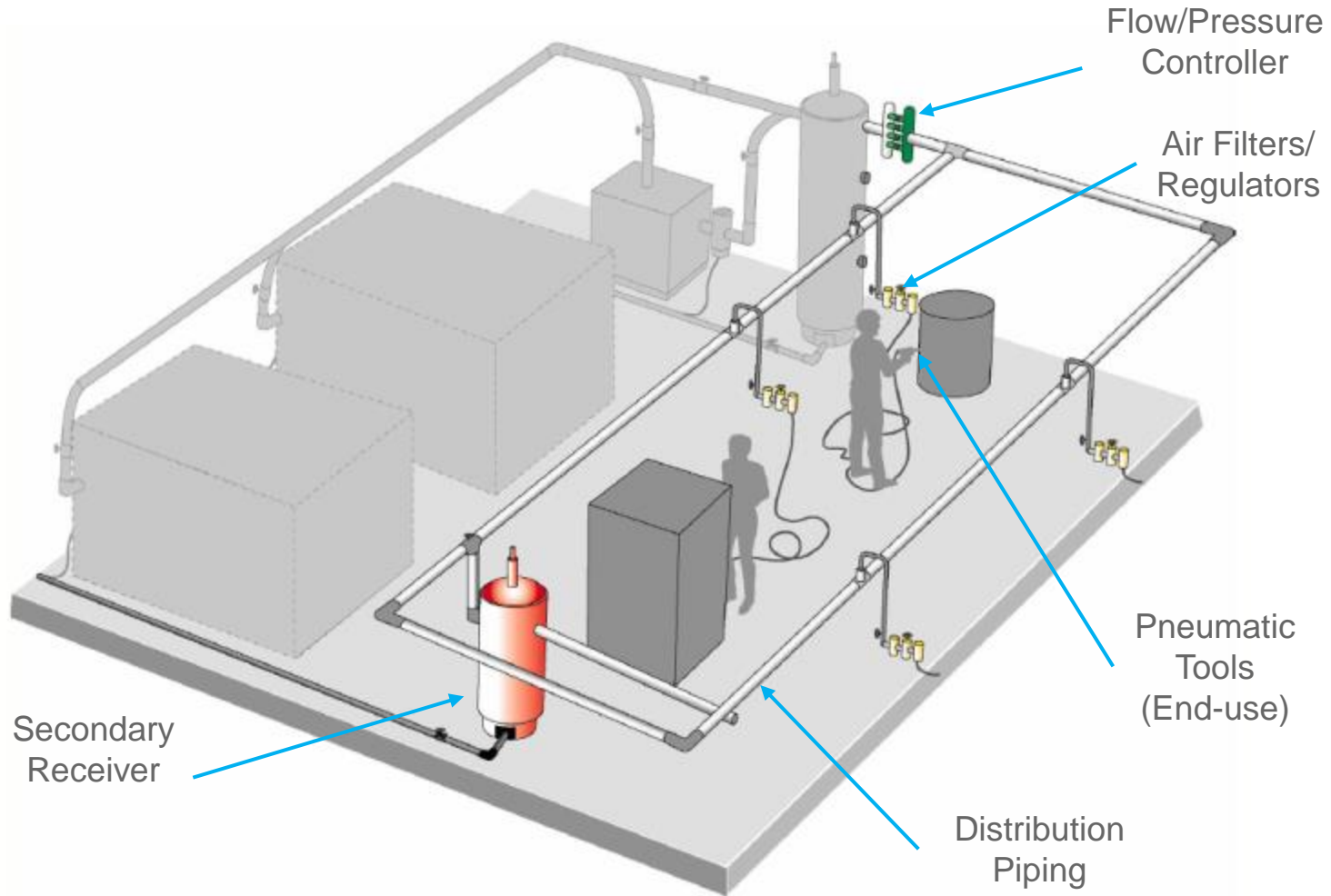
- Increase air storage to reduce compressor cycling and respond to peak air demands
- Use appropriate filters as per manufacturers specification



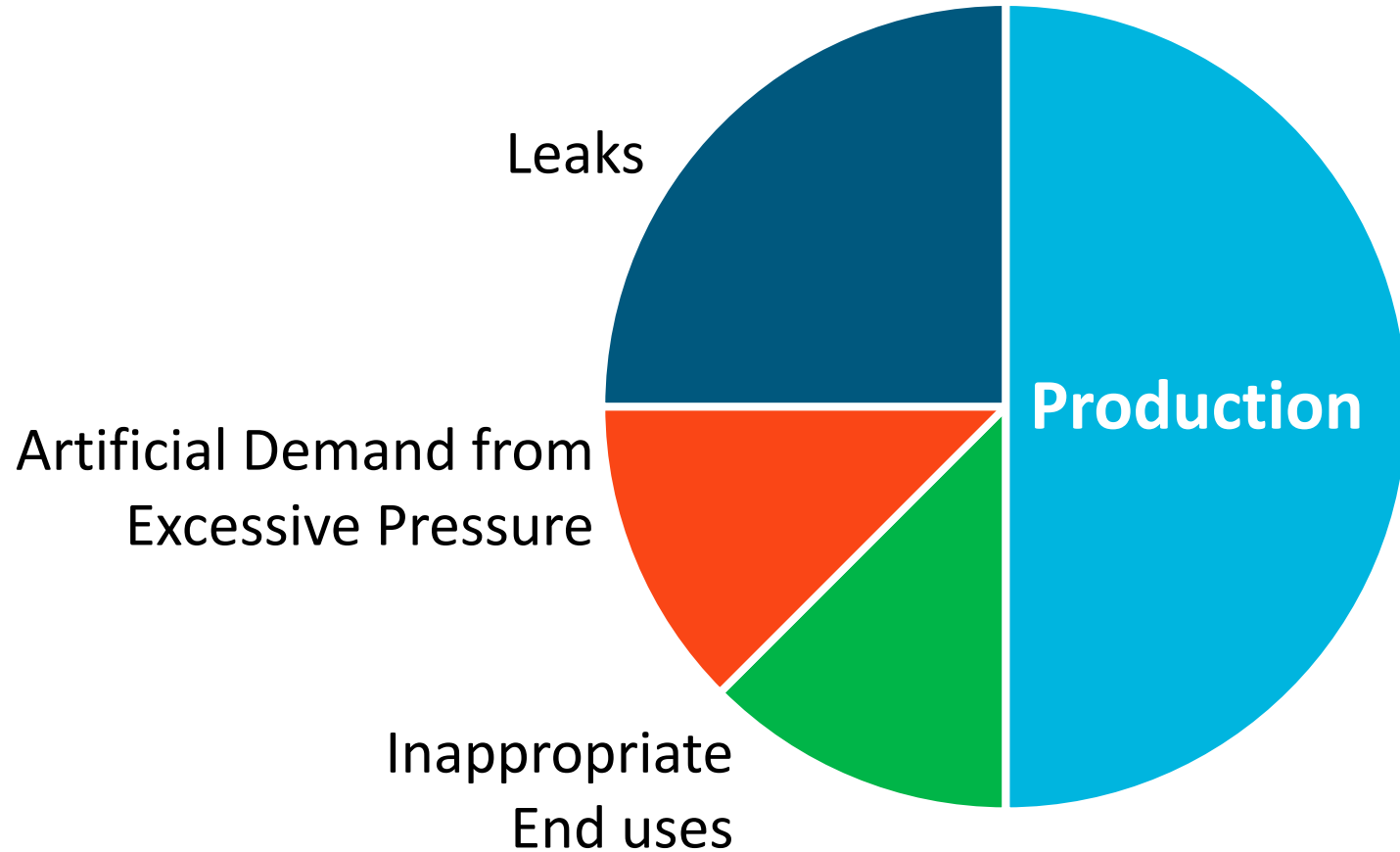
# Compressed Air System – Demand Side

Demand side typically consists of:

Distribution piping, secondary storage, and end use equipment



# Typical Components of Demand



# Distribution Piping

**Pipe Diameter**  
(inches)

1

36

2

263

3

431

4

909

2,679

6

6,757

8

14,286

10

Equivalent Flow (CFM)

# Reduce System Pressure

Reducing system pressure may:

- improve overall system performance
- reduce leakage rates
- help with capacity problems
- Reduce stress on components

## **Did you know?**

Every **2 psi** reduction in system pressure equals about **1% horsepower savings.**

**10psi = 5% savings!**



# Eliminate Inappropriate Uses

## Suggested Actions:

- Walk through your plant and identify all compressed air uses and, if possible, flow & pressure requirements
- Consult with a compressed air specialist to eliminate any inappropriate uses.

Inappropriate Application	Efficient Alternative
Open blowing for cleaning, drying, etc.	Low-pressure blowers, brooms, low flow nozzles
Air actuation	Electric actuation
Air motors (mixers, agitators, etc.)	Electric motors



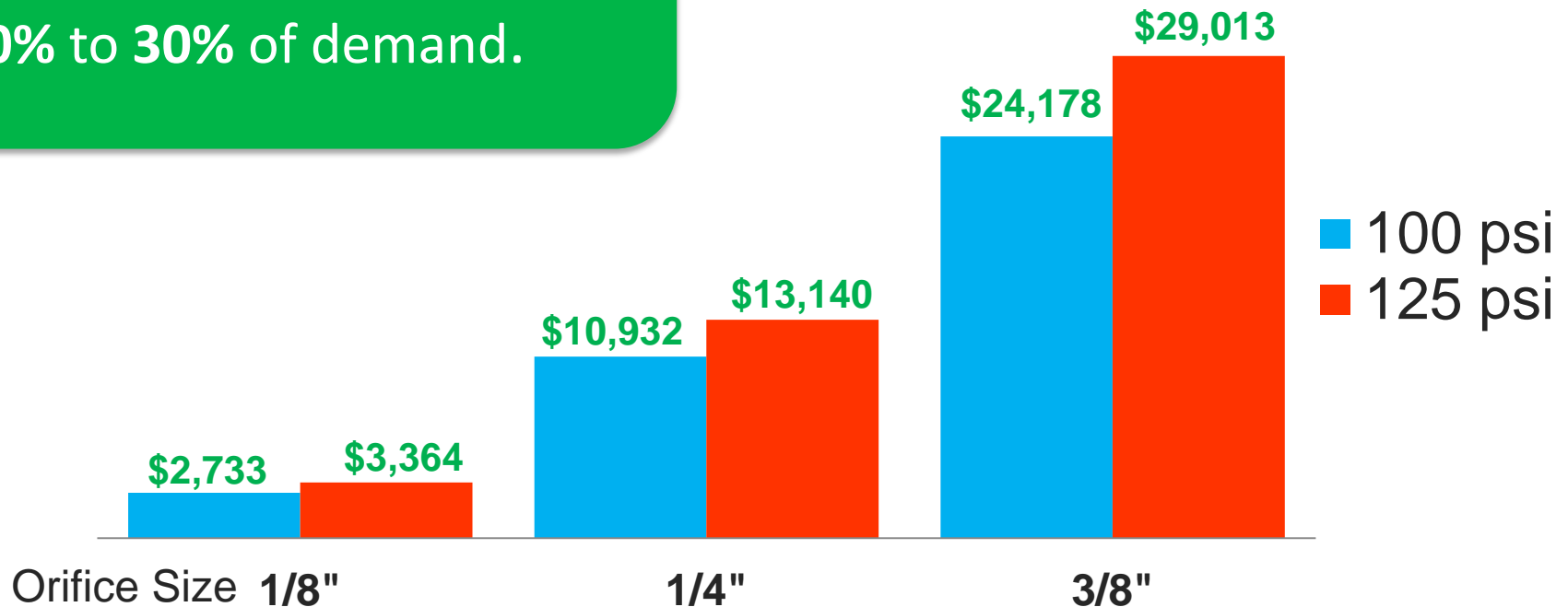


# Air Leaks

## Did you know?

Air Leaks typically represent  
20% to 30% of demand.

## Annual Air Leak Cost



# Compressed Air Leak Audit

Plant wide walkthrough and review of the compressed air system

Determine location and size of leaks in the system

Log leaks on a tracking spreadsheet

Calculate air consumption and cost of leaks

Prioritize maintenance schedule



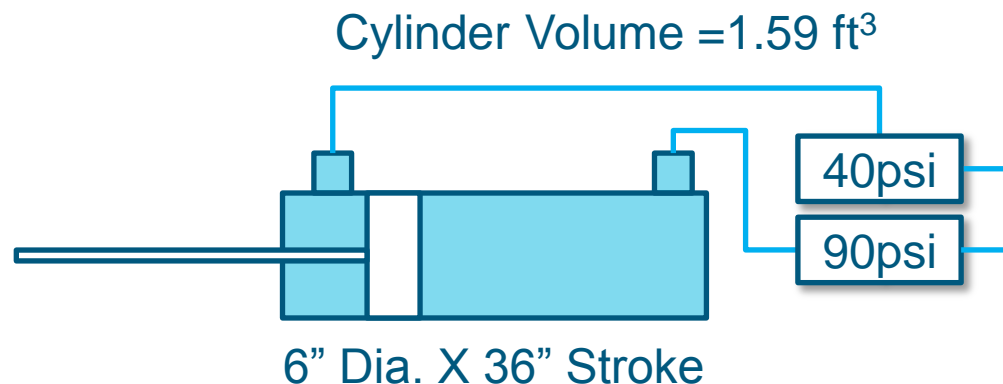
27-Oct-14								
	Air Leaks Repaired		Cost Avoidance			CO <sub>2</sub> Identified	NO Identified	l
	CFM	Cost	Identified	Repaired	% Complete			
	0.0	\$0.00	\$4,794.88	\$0.00	0%	72250	156	
Record Number	Group Name	Location Name	Type of Gas	Pressure at Leak	dB Reading	Problem Description	Hours Per Day	D
S101	Wash	Extractor	Air	100	73	Valve Leak, far left	24	
S102	Wash	Extractor	Air	100	67	Valve leak far right, when activated	1	
S103	Wash	Extractor	Air	100	40	Valve leak second on left, when ativated	24	
S104	Wash	Dryer	Air	75	25	Drain on filter bowl	24	
S105	Wash	Milnor Dryer	Air	100	27	Compression fitting on 3/8 poly line	24	
S106	Wash	Milnor Dryer	Air	100	67	Right cabinet bottom valve, when activated	1	
S107	Wash	Milnor Dryer	Air	100	70	Left cabinet bottom valve, when activated	1	
S108	Wash	Sheet folder	Air	75	67	Regulator inside cabinet	24	
S109	Main area	Thermopatch	Air	100	37	Hole in air line	24	
S110	Main Area	Thermopatch	Air	100	34	Inside press	24	



# Dual Pressurization

## Did you know?

Some applications require high force in only **one direction** and minimal force on the return.



### Compression Ratio:

@ 90psi = 7.12

@ 40psi = 3.72

### Air used by cylinder

Up = 4.2 ft³

Down = 2.2 ft³

**Air saved:**  
**= 24%**

# Proven Energy Efficiency Measures

<b>Supply Side (25-35% Savings)</b>	<b>Demand Side (65-75% Savings)</b>
Improve Controls (Sequencer)	Identifying and repairing air leaks
Reduce system pressure	Regular maintenance
Regular maintenance	Eliminate inappropriate air usage
Energy Efficient Compressors/Dryers	Minimize unregulated users
Compressor heat recovery potential	Look for alternative forms of power

# Self Serve Incentive Program

1. Talk to your vendor



2. Submit an application



3. Receive Incentive



### Audit Details

Report Date : 7/27/2015  
SIP File Number : 16000

## Executive Summary

General comments:

In July 7th the above referenced facility was data logged for compressor power, plant pressure and flow. After review of the data, VSWP consumes a total of 381,500 Kwhrs/year in the compressor room alone. Energy savings can be achieved through up-grading of equipment, control strategy and re-

**Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs)**

ECM	Estimated Savings
1. Upgrade Compressor Motors	150,000 Kwhrs/year
2. Implement Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs)	100,000 Kwhrs/year
3. Optimize Control Strategy	50,000 Kwhrs/year
4. Upgrade Piping and Valves	20,000 Kwhrs/year
5. Install Energy Recovery System	10,000 Kwhrs/year
6. Implement Leak Detection and Repair Program	5,000 Kwhrs/year
7. Upgrade Insulation	5,000 Kwhrs/year
8. Install Energy Monitoring System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
9. Implement Energy Management Software	5,000 Kwhrs/year
10. Upgrade Lighting System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
11. Upgrade HVAC System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
12. Upgrade Water Heating System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
13. Upgrade Cooling Tower System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
14. Upgrade Chilled Water System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
15. Upgrade Steam System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
16. Upgrade Gas System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
17. Upgrade Electrical System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
18. Upgrade Fire Protection System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
19. Upgrade Security System	5,000 Kwhrs/year
20. Upgrade Communication System	5,000 Kwhrs/year

Table 1: Proposed Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs)		
	Demand	Energy Savings
	(kW)	(kWh/yr)
1. LED Lighting	100	1,000
2. HVAC System Upgrade	250	2,500
3. Water Heating System Upgrade	150	1,500
4. Building Envelope Improvements	300	3,000
5. Renewable Energy Integration	400	4,000
6. Smart Building Controls	120	1,200
7. Energy Management System (EMS)	80	800
8. Power Factor Correction	60	600
9. Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs)	90	900
10. Energy Audits	40	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>14,600</b>

ECM #	Description	Demand Reduction [kW]	Energy Savings [kWh/yr]	Project Cost [\$]
1	Reduce System Pressure	3	19,000	\$ 13,500
2	Efficient Compressed Air Dryers	2	15,000	\$ 62,000
3	Efficient Compressors	23	159,000	
4				
5				
6				
Total :		28	193,000	\$ 75,500
		Total Non-Electric Savings : \$ -		

Proposed Compressor System Description		
	Rated	Rated

Proposed Compressor System Description						
Compressor ID	Function	Manufacturer / Model	Rated Motor Power [HP]	Rated Flow [acfm]	Rated Pressure [psig]	Control / Type
#1	Primary	Gardner Denver VS40 (54HP)	54	243	100	VFD

Proposed Air Dryer System Description			
	Rated	Rated	Rated

Proposed Air Dryer System Description				
Manufacturer / Model	Rated Package Power [kW]	Rated Flow [acfm]	Rated Pressure [psig]	Type
Gardner Denver RES246	1.4	246	120	Refrigerated - Cycling

## 8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

[illegible]

may be required to re-capture the gas during analysis

ated by way of pump down and calculated at various time throughout the  
essors. Formula used: CFM (Free air) = V (Volume in Cubic Feet) x (P1 - P2) x 1.25  
ge at lower pressures) / T (time in minutes between P1 & P2) x 14.7. V=39cuft x  
x 14.7 = 4000/60 = 60cfm estimated. Open blowing in the plant could be present  
ould be used. The VFD compressor will accommodate these

and further demand side  
adjustments to the system.

Provide any additional recommendations for the customer to consider

and further demand side adjustments to the system.

*Provide any additional recommendations for the customer to consider*

No loss tank drains are recommended at all low points in the system to remove condensate. A condensate management system is also recommended to remove the oil from the condensate before draining to sewer. New bylaws are in place for condensate management systems. Add a drain the the existing "wet tank" drain will come with new tank and all related compressor room equipment. No condensate system has been added to this study. Contact Skeans for more information.

# Q & A





# Thank You!

**Niels Broers:** [niels.broers@bchydro.com](mailto:niels.broers@bchydro.com)

Specialist Engineer, BC Hydro

**Shane Simard:** [shanes@skeans.com](mailto:shanes@skeans.com)

Sales, Service, and Energy Manager, Compressor Division, Skeans