

Dehumidification to eliminate ice,  
condensation and microbial growth



Martin Ginty, March 17<sup>th</sup> Kunming DCVMN Workshop



## Key facts

- Munters began trading in 1946 and incorporated in 1955
- 3,000+ employees
- 16 major Manufacturing Plants
- 5 Logistics and Assembly Hubs
- 53 sales and service centres serving customers in more than 30 countries
- Headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden
- Over 300,000 air treatment systems installed





# Munters Group



› Agriculture



› Automotive



› Chemical Processing



› Commercial & Public Buildings



› Construction



› Data Center & Telecom Cooling



› Defense & Aerospace



› Education



› Electronics



› Food & beverage



› General Industry/Production



› Greenhouse



› Healthcare



› Oil, Gas & Petroleum



› Pharmaceutical



› Power Generation & Distribution



› Pulp, Paper & Printing



› Recreation & Leisure



› Retail & Supermarkets



› Shipbuilding & Marine



› Steel Industry



› Storage, Preservation & Archives



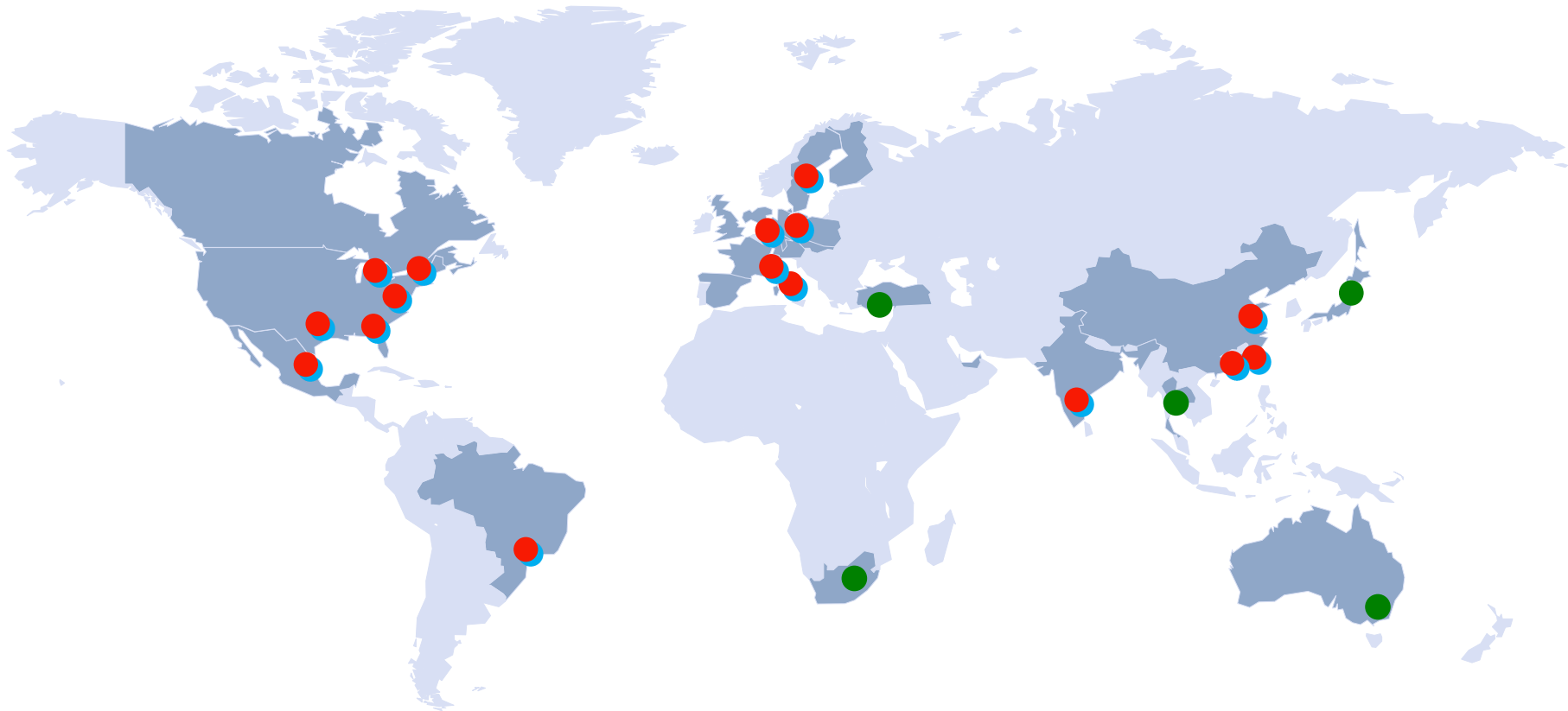
› Temporary Structures



› Water & Waste Water



# Global Manufacturing & Logistics Support



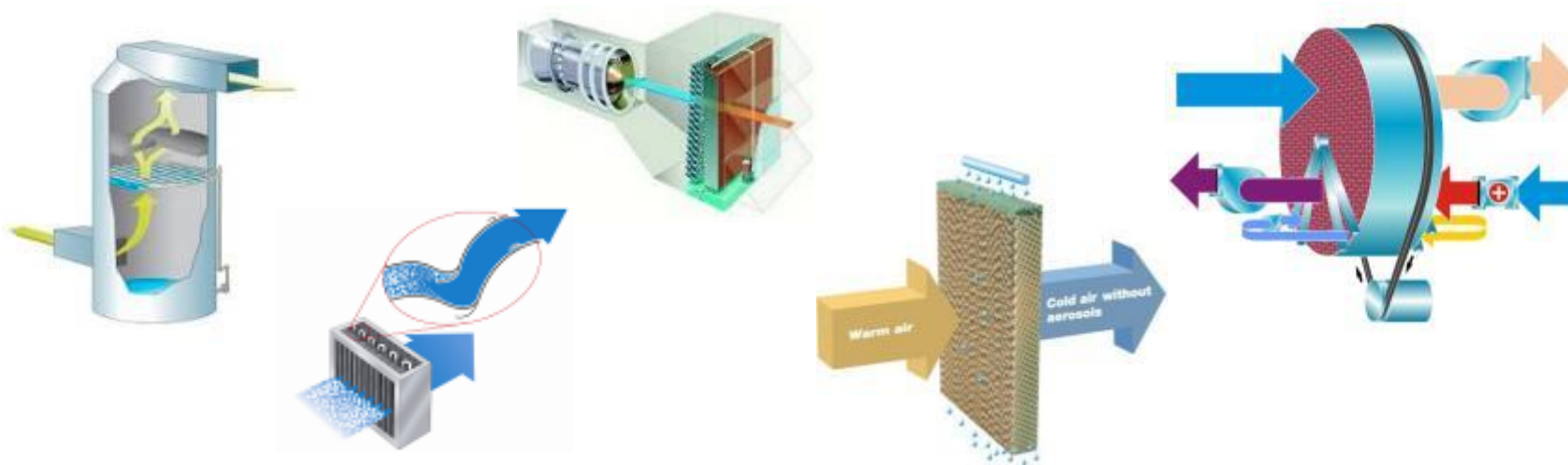
- Manufacturing plants
- Logistic & assembly hubs

16 Manufacturing Plants  
5 Logistic & Assembly Hubs  
53 Sales & Service Centres



# Munters Core Competencies

- Dehumidification
- Humidification
- Evaporative cooling
- Refrigeration
- Heating
- Energy recovery
- Mechanical separation liquid from gas





## Pharma - Manufacturing of Tablets





## Pharma - Packaging of Effervescent Tablets





# Pharma - Manufacturing of Gelatine Capsules



- Drying of gelatine
- Production of capsule shape
- Capsule content
- Packaging



## Pharma - After freeze-drying





## Pharma - Cleanrooms





## Pharma – Chilled and Cold Storage



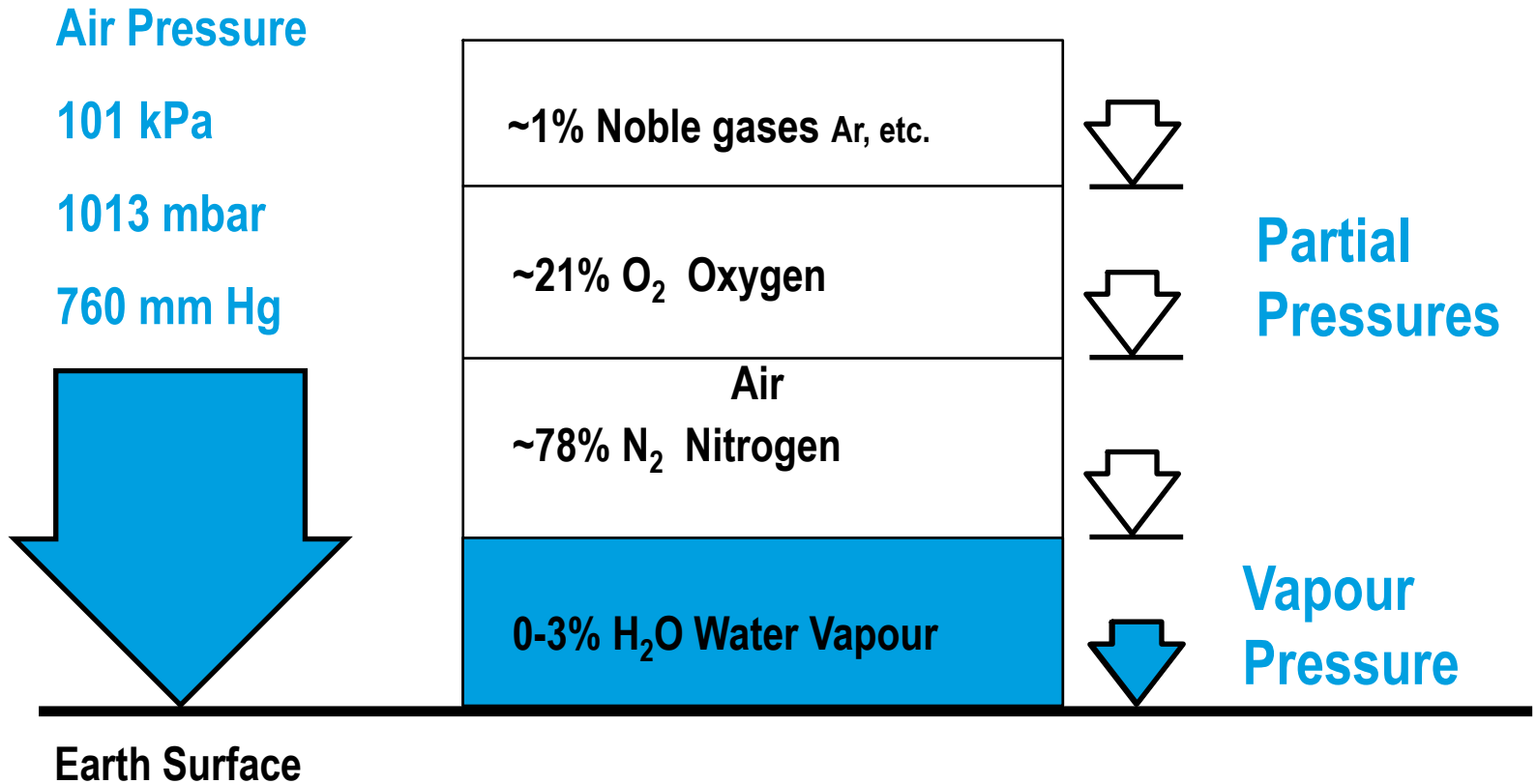




Humidity



# The Composition Of Air





## How To Quantify Humidity

- Absolute Humidity (or “Humidity Ratio”)
  - The amount of (kilo)grams of water vapour per kilograms of (dry) air (g/kg)
- Relative Humidity
  - The ratio (in %) between the actual quantity of water vapour in the air and the maximum quantity of water vapour that the air can contain at a certain temperature

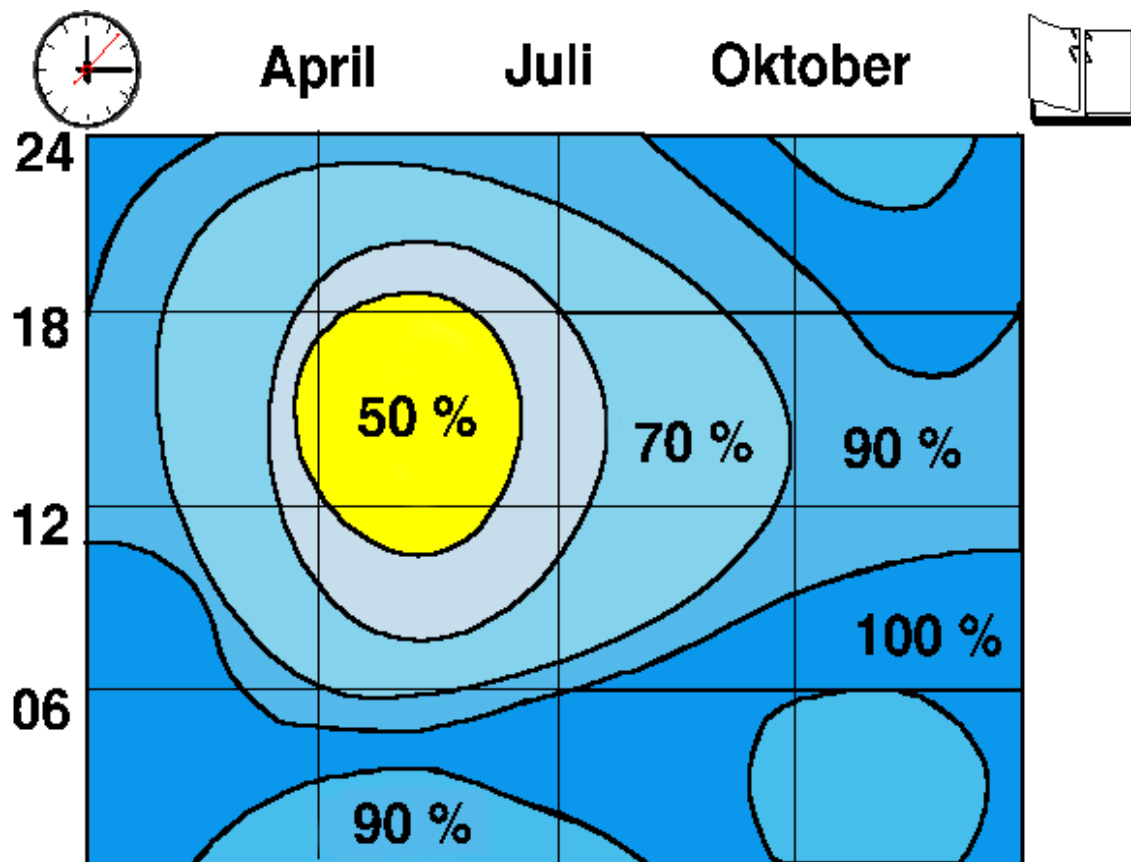


## Humidity And Temperature

- Warm air can contain more water vapour than cold air
- Air at a certain temperature will have a corresponding maximum content of water vapour
- When too much water vapour is in the air (at a certain temperature), the air is “saturated” and the excess moisture will condense out
- This can happen when the temperature falls



# Outdoor Relative Humidity





## Typical summer temperature and humidity conditions

	Dry temp	X-value g/kg
Stockholm	19,8	12,2
Riyadh	22,9	13,0
Sydney	24,8	16,4
New York	26,8	17,8
Tokyo	28,0	20,4
Rio de Janiero	30,1	21,5
Singapore	28,9	21,7
Shanghai	31,0	23,0
Caracas (We)	31,7	27,2
Raufahofn (Isl)	13,9	8,9

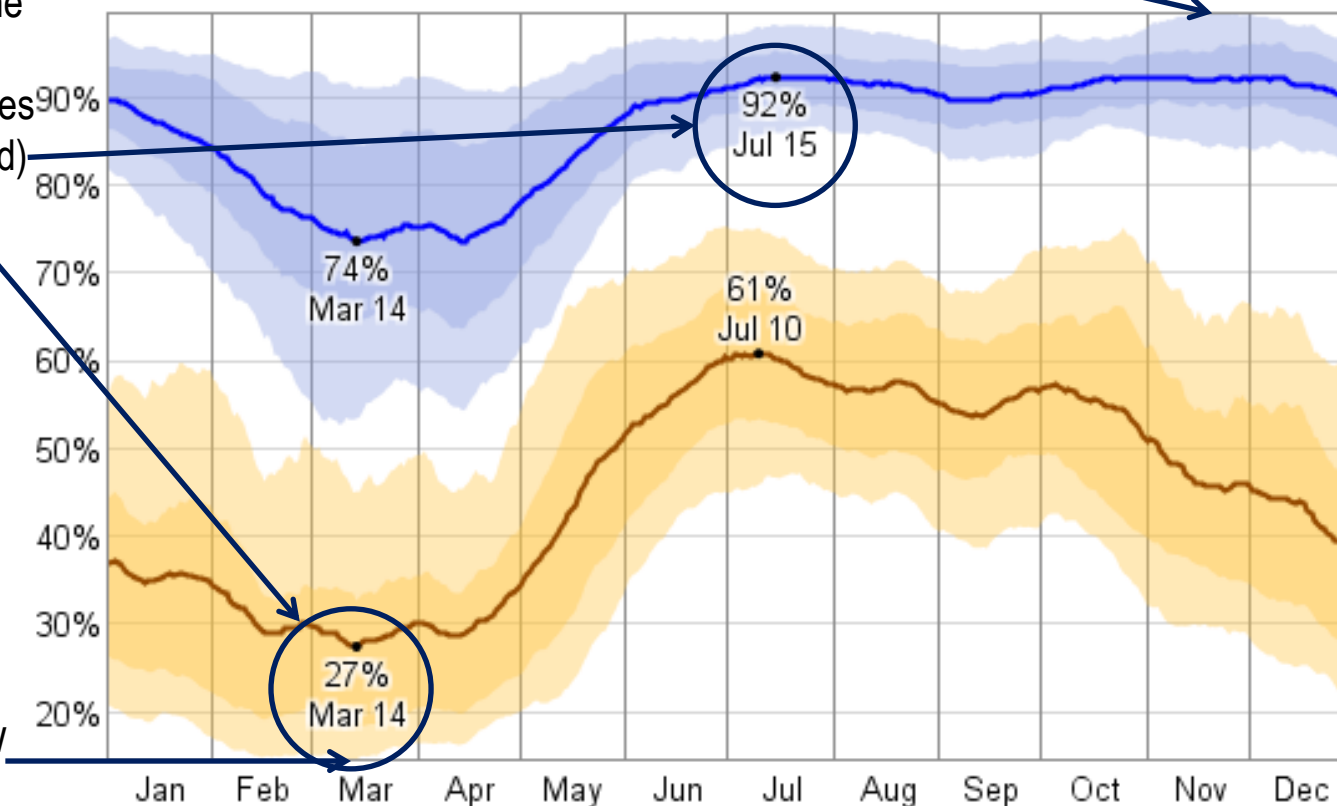


# Local Relative Humidity Levels – Kunming Example

Over the course of the year the average relative humidity ranges from 92% (very humid) to 27% (dry)

Reaches as high as 100% (very humid).

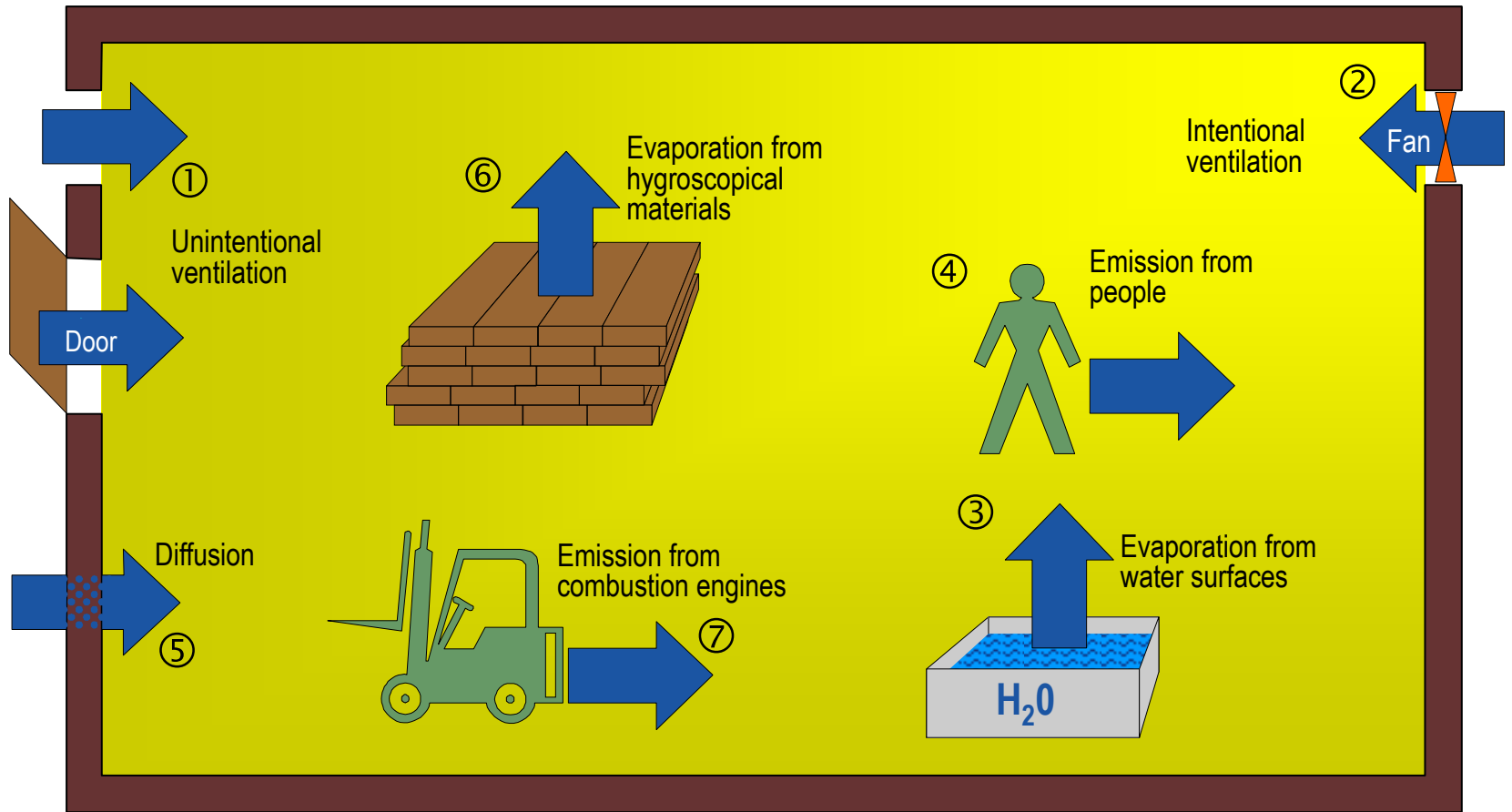
Rarely drops below 15% (very dry)



The average daily high (blue) and low (brown) relative humidity with percentile bands (inner bands from 25th to 75th percentile, outer bands from 10th to 90th percentile).



# Sources Of Humidity In a “Closed” Environment



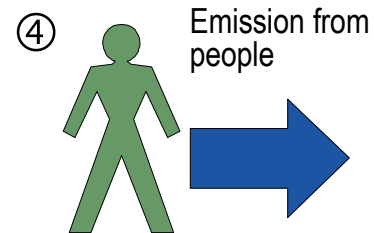


## Sources Of Humidity In a “Closed” Environment

Humidity emitted depending on activity, clothing and room temperature

Average value at 20 - 25 °C and normal clothing:

- High activity 200 g/h
- Medium activity 125 g/h
- Low activity 40 g/h





# Does Humidity Cause Problems?

We will quickly walk through a list of humidity related processes that cause damages, quality loss and/or cost increases.

- Condensation (water) and frost formation (ice – i.e. condensation below 0°C)
- Corrosion of metals
- Influence of moisture on resistance values (electronic malfunctions)
- Mould affecting hygiene in ducts, systems, buildings and manufacturing processes
- Property and quality change of materials and substances
  - Storage and production processes that require a stable, optimal climate
  - Product drying (deliberate moisture reduction, avoiding too high temperatures)
- Chemical reactions with moisture in the air
- Special cases of humidity impact
  - Comfort impact
  - Energy impact



## Visible Humidity - Condensation on cold surfaces or in cold air





## Visible Humidity - Condensation on cold surfaces or in cold air



Source: [www.myallergo.de](http://www.myallergo.de)



Source: [www.teachingengineering.org](http://www.teachingengineering.org)



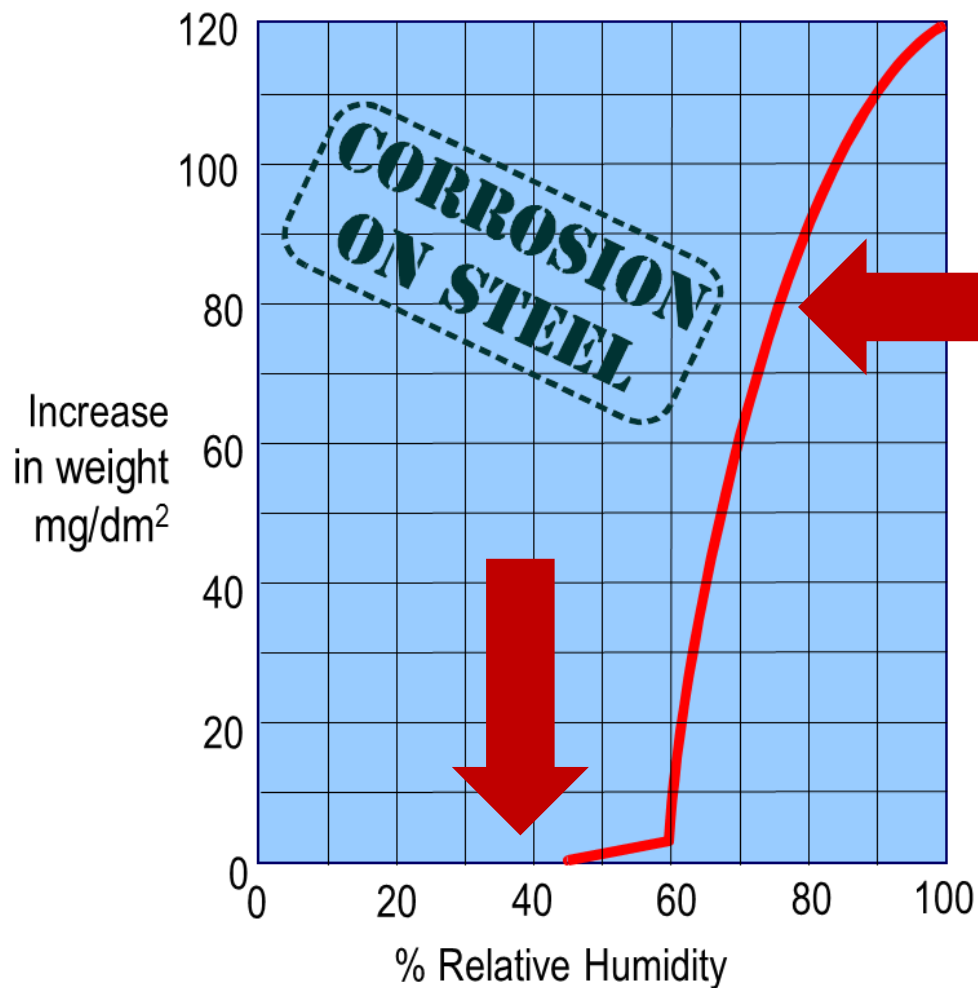
Source: [www.bontott-tetoablak.hu](http://www.bontott-tetoablak.hu)



Source: [www.szelloztetes.hu](http://www.szelloztetes.hu)



# High Humidity Causes Corrosion



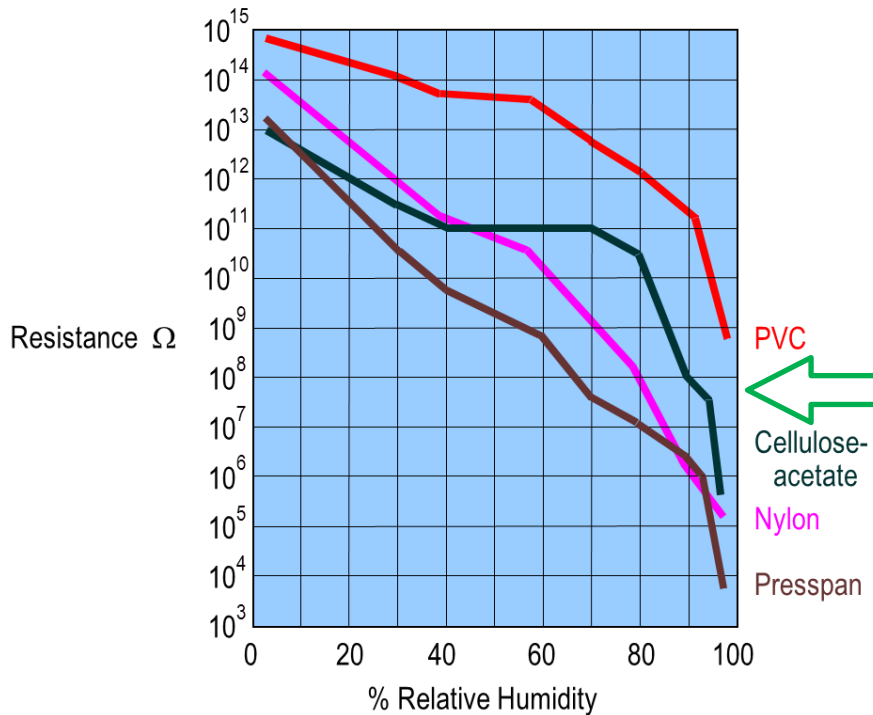
**Above 60% Relative Humidity (RH) the speed of corrosion on steel rises exponentially**

**Below 45% RH corrosion development on steel is virtually ZERO**

**Humidity control can be used to stop or slow down corrosion**

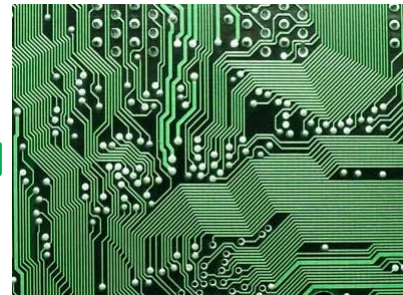


# Influence of Moisture on Resistance Values

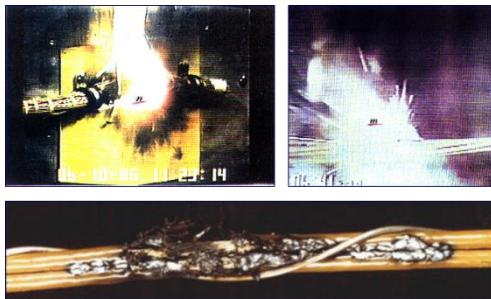


**Electric conductivity increases in moist environments**

Over insulation material



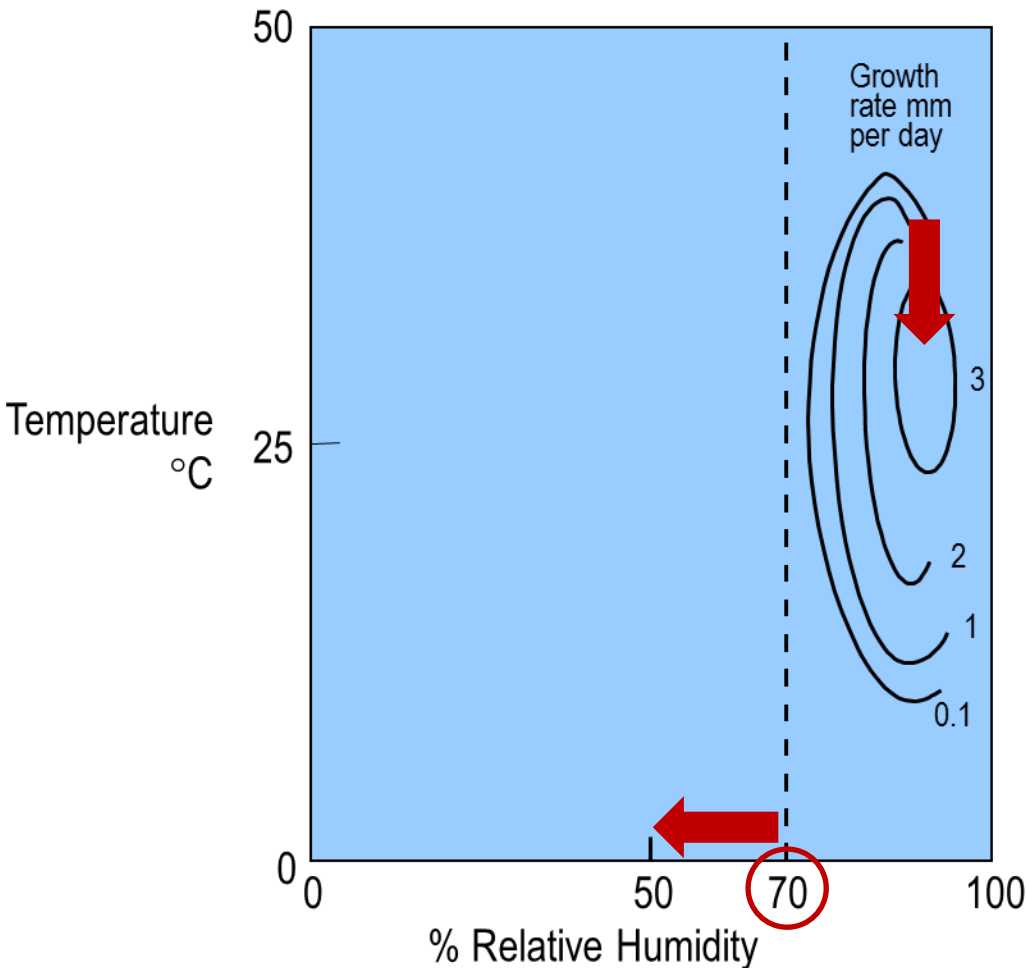
But also through air.....



Simulated Arcing Event

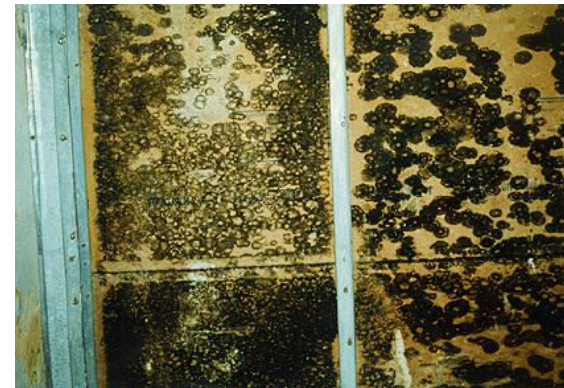


# High Humidity Speeds Up Mould Growth



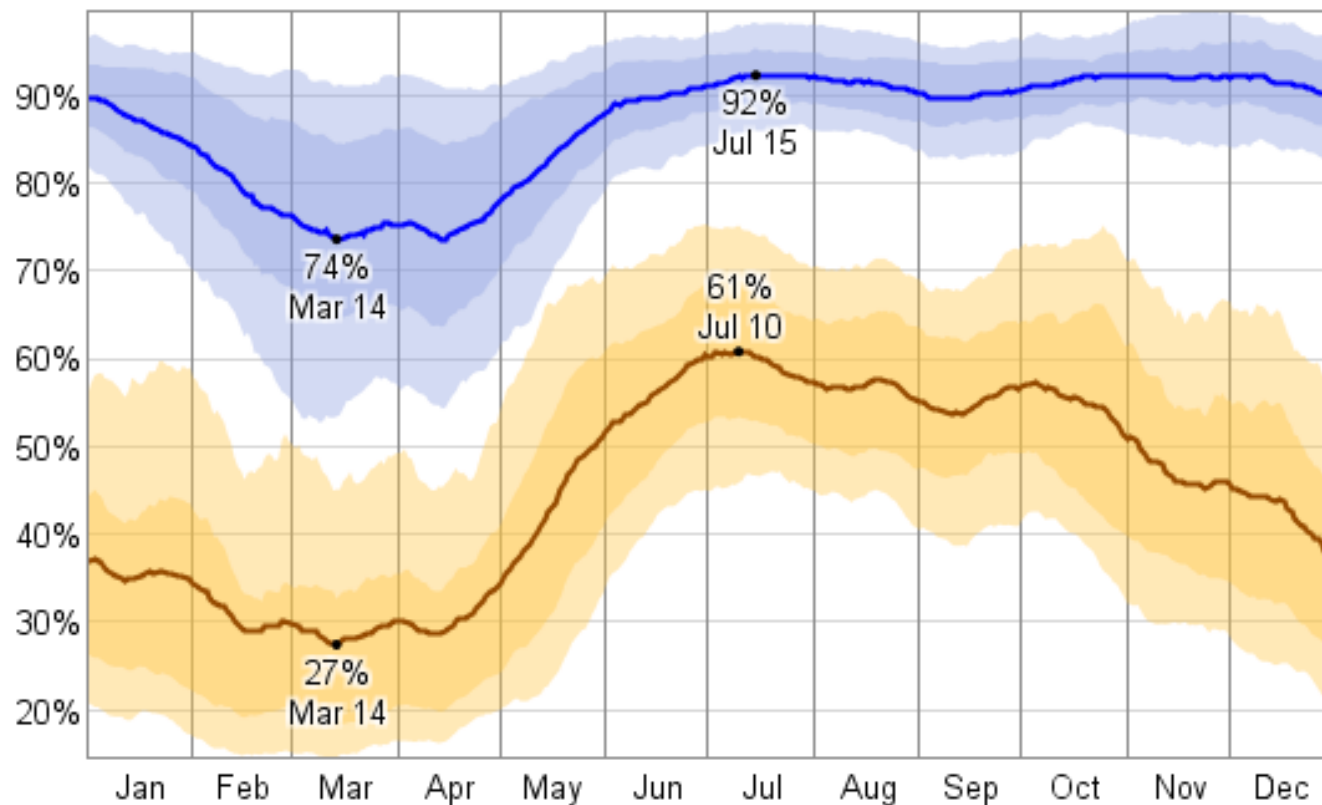
**Mould has high growth rates at higher temperatures (20-30°C) and high humidities. They can extract water from moist air.**

**Below 70% Relative Humidity mould growth is virtually ZERO**





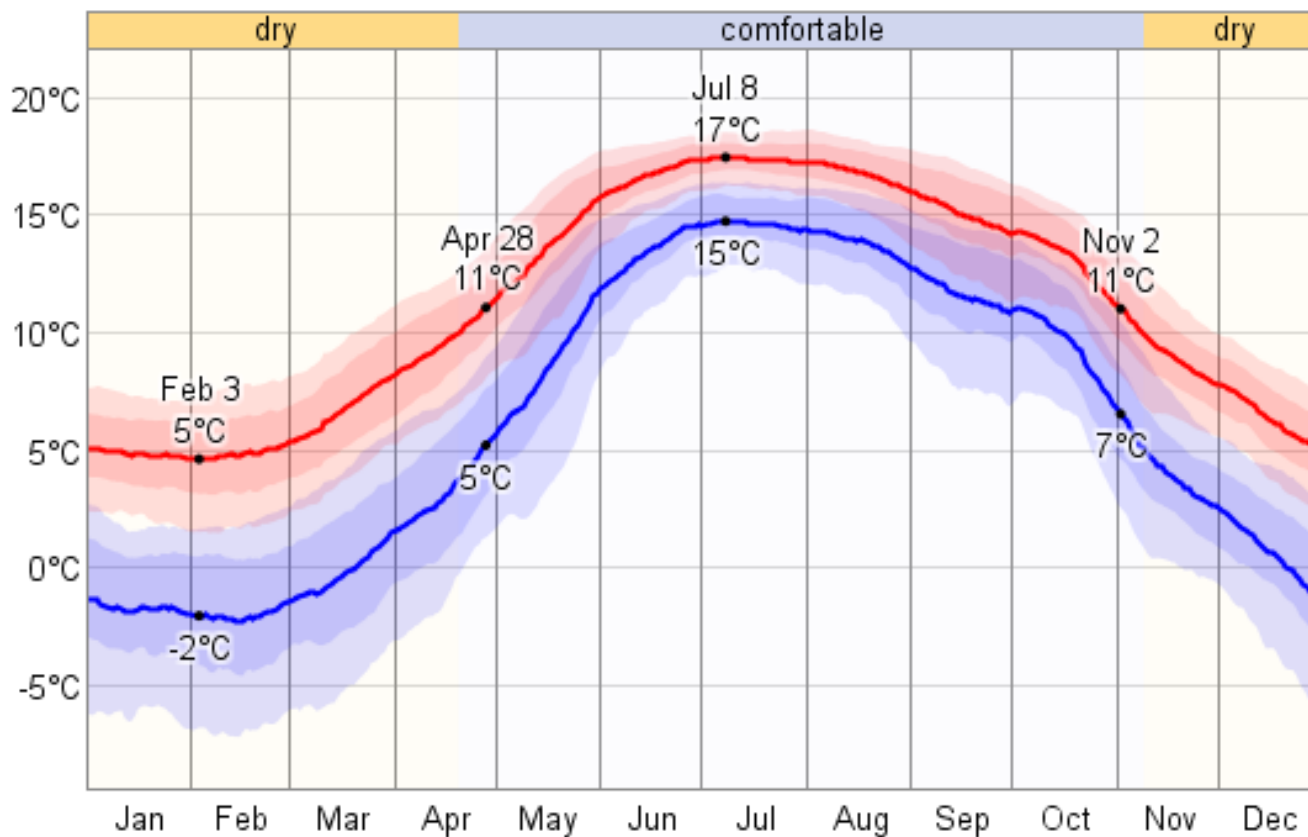
## Local Relative Humidity Levels – Kunming Example



The average daily high (blue) and low (brown) relative humidity with percentile bands (inner bands from 25th to 75th percentile, outer bands from 10th to 90th percentile).



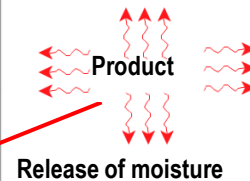
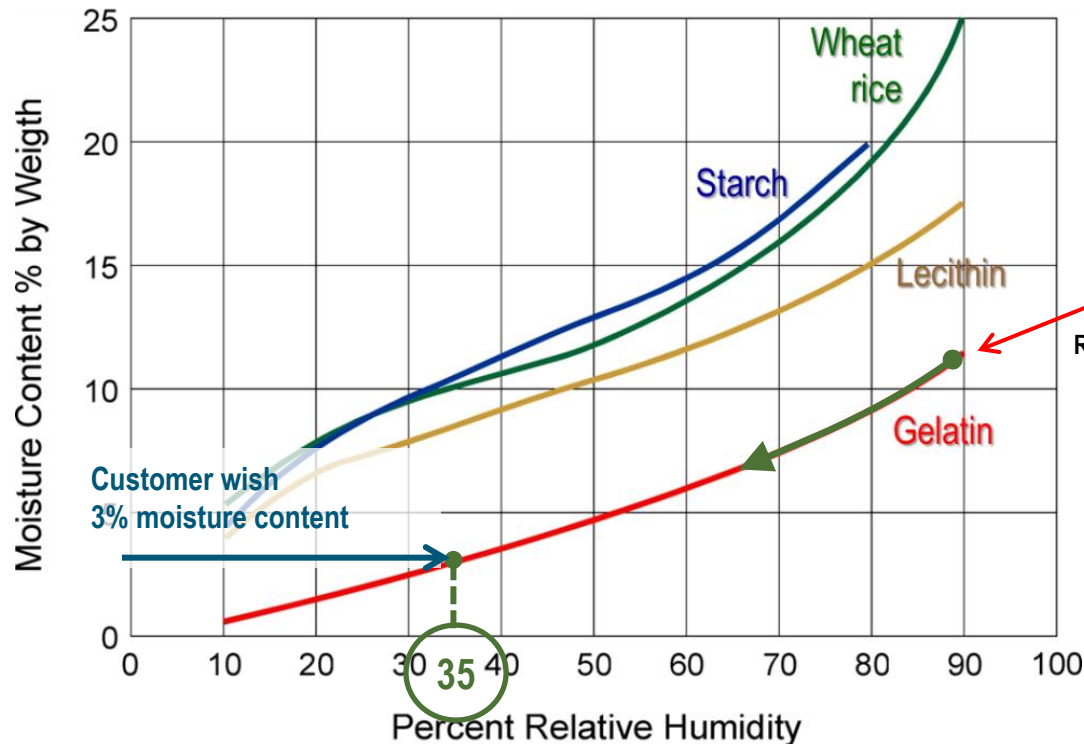
## Local Dewpoint Levels – Kunming Example



The daily average low (blue) and high (red) dew point with percentile bands (inner band from 25th to 75th percentile, outer band from 10th to 90th percentile).



# Property and Quality Change of Materials and Substances



**Some manufacturing and curing processes require a product to be dried**

**Product drying is a delicate process, especially if heat is a concern**



# Humidity Control and Energy

## Moisture Removal Cost Comparison

### Typical Energy Cost to Remove 120 Pounds of Water Per Hour

Dehumidifier	\$1.00
Air Conditioner	\$7.86
Produce/Dairy Cases	\$9.13
Meat/Deli Cases	\$10.62
Frozen Food Cases	\$14.83
Ice Cream Cases	\$16.72

Source: Tyler Refrigeration Advance Development

**Desiccant dehumidification can save a lot of energy**

**Depending on the temperature and initial humidity level, moisture removal through condensation can be costly and ineffective**

**If applied properly, it is much more cost effective to dehumidify than to heat objects and buildings**

**Dehumidification can be combined with cooling to reach the desired climate at optimal energy efficiency**





Humidity Control



# The Benefits of Humidity Control

- Condensation prevention
- Corrosion prevention
- Electrical resistance optimisation
- Mould prevention
- Property change optimisation, incl. drying
- Chemical reaction prevention
- Comfort optimisation
- Energy optimisation
- Other reasons (damping, ionisation prevention, etc.)

**Mostly, the benefits are found in a combination of above reasons**



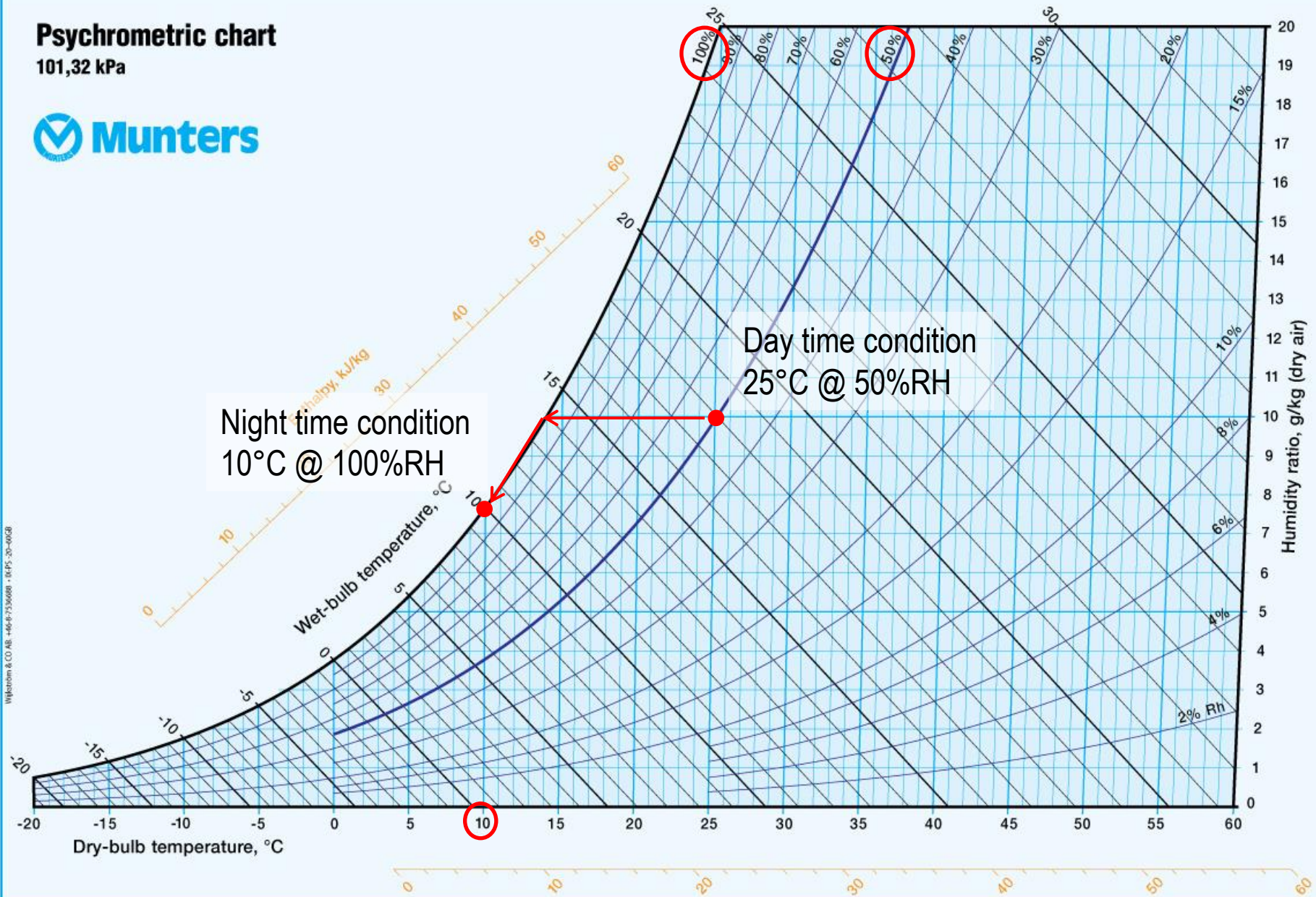
# Psychrometric chart

101,32 kPa



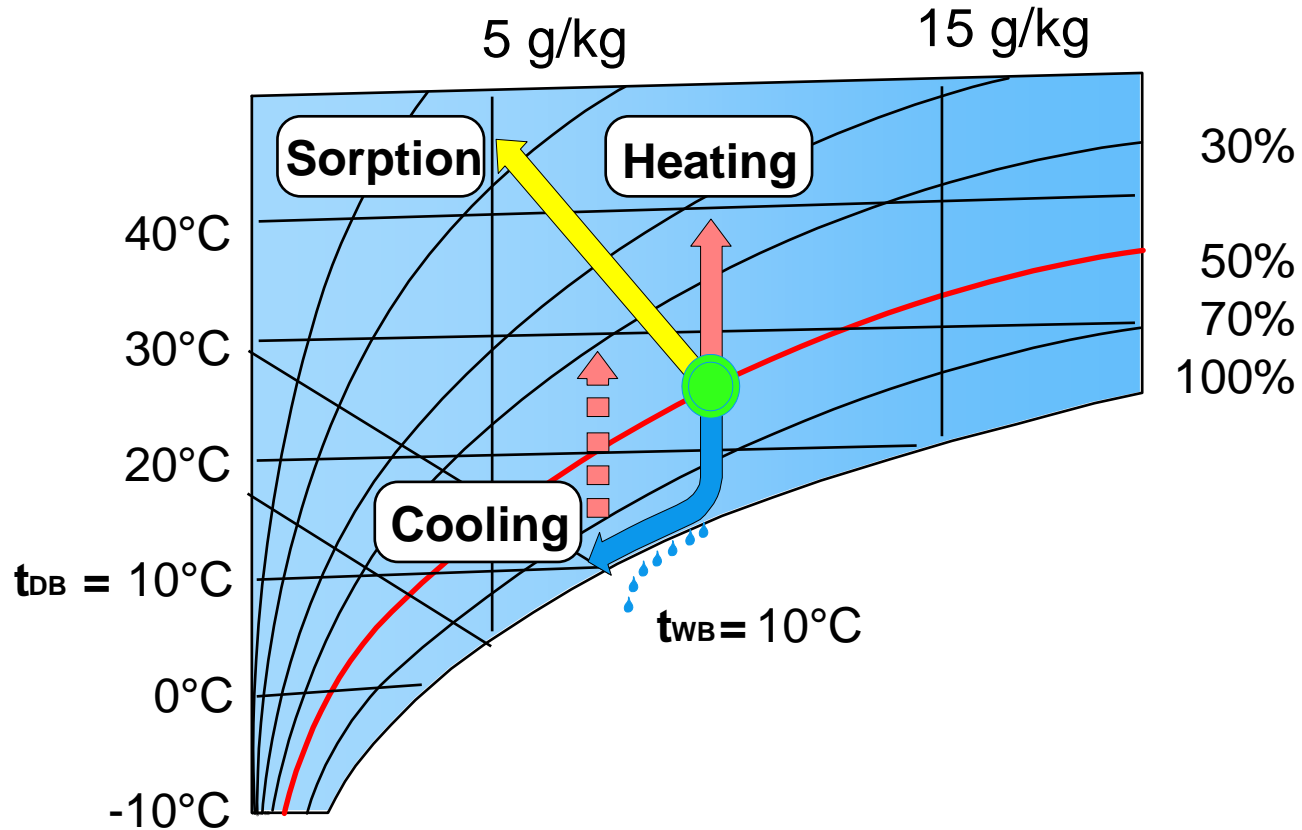
Night time condition  
10°C @ 100%RH

Day time condition  
25°C @ 50%RH



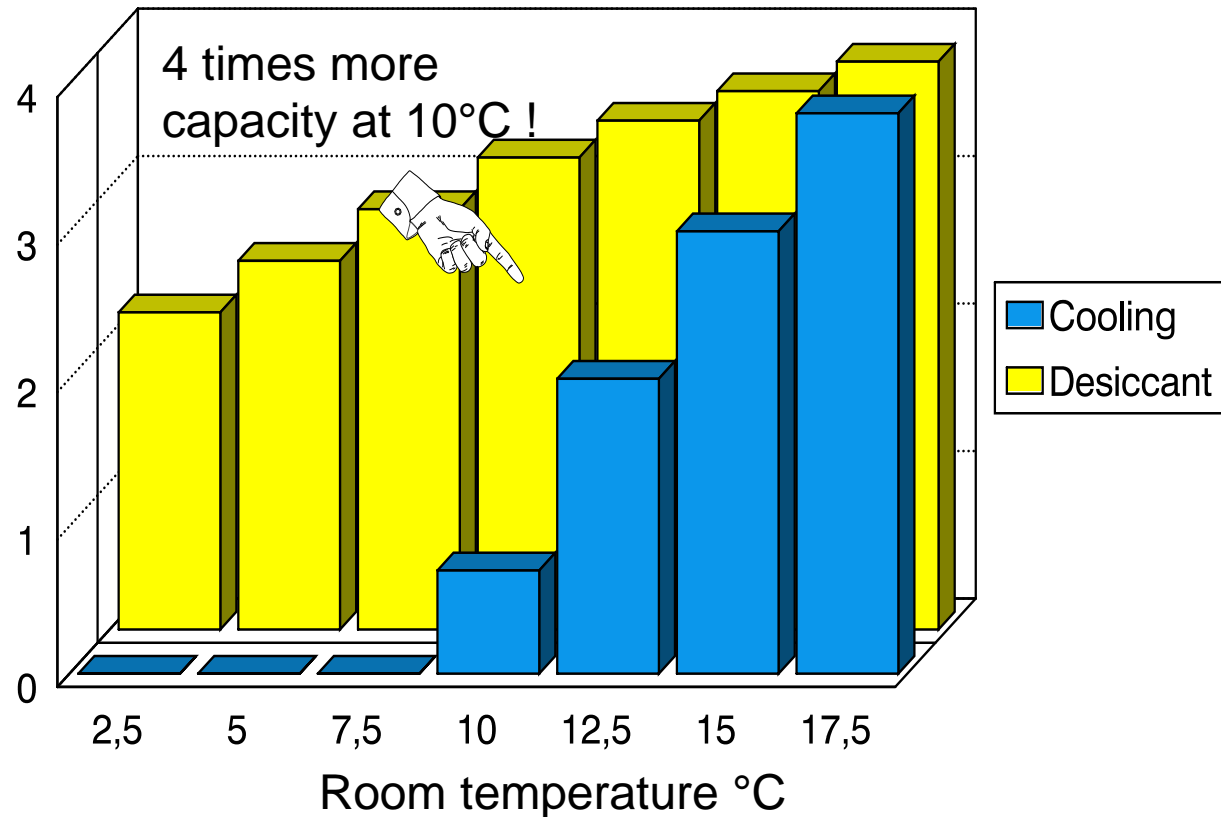


## Changing Environment - Methods



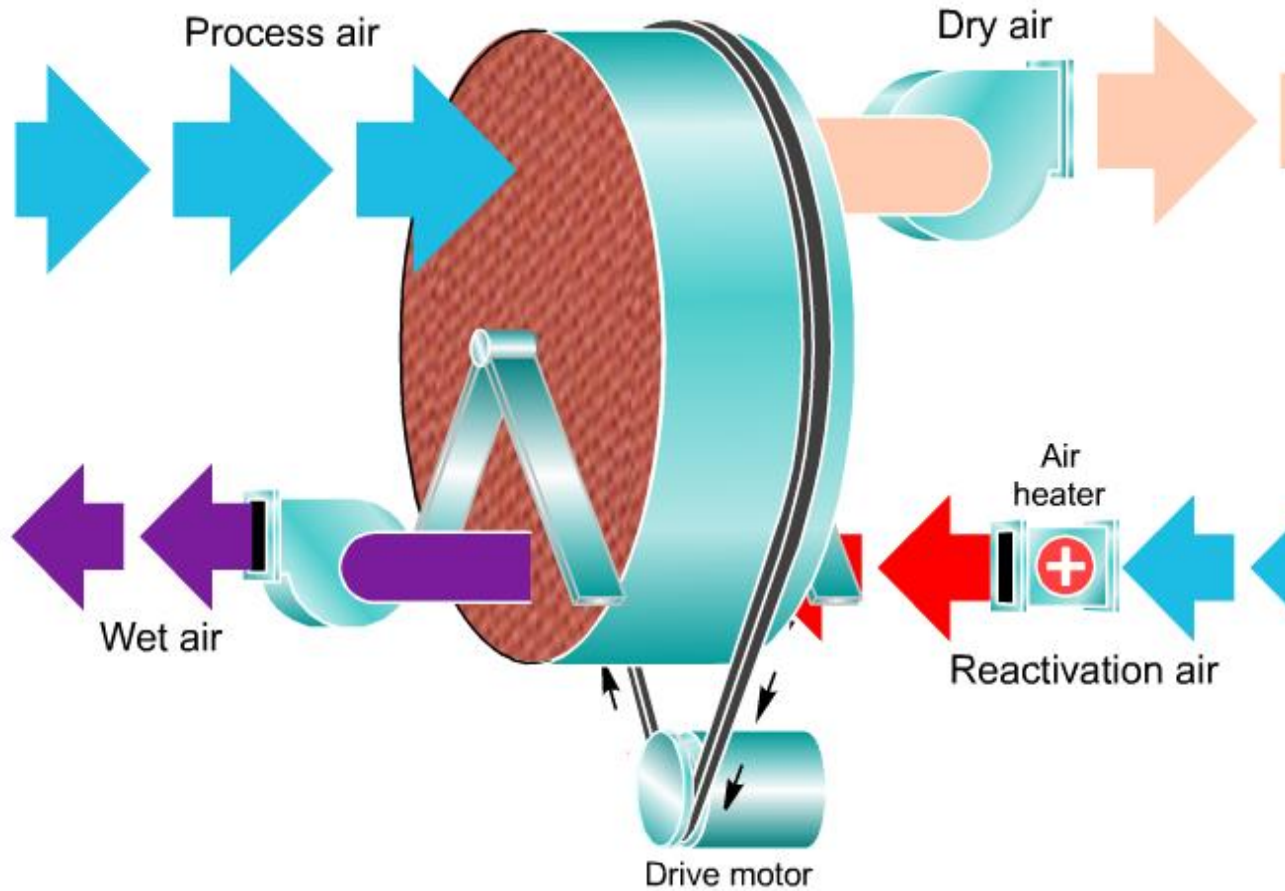


## Desiccant vs Cooling - Dhumidification Capacities at 50% RH





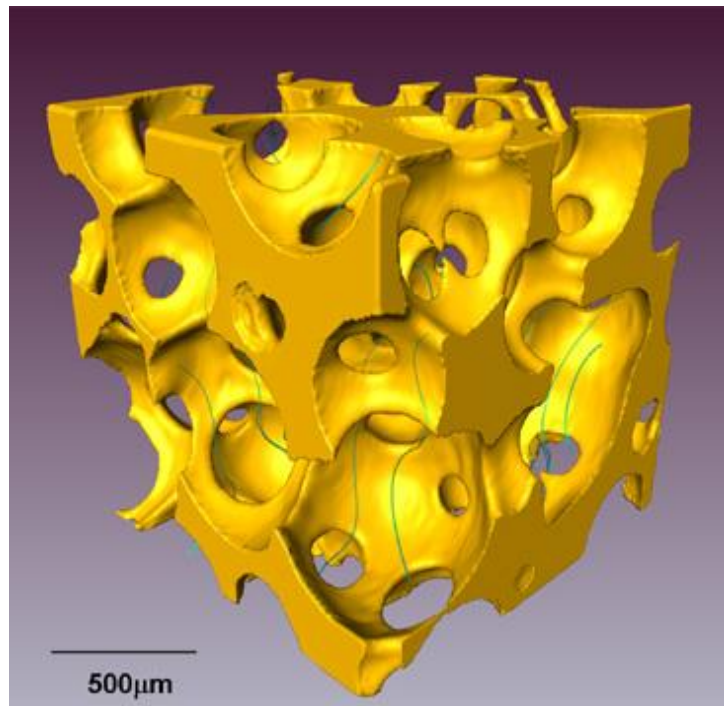
# Sorption Dehumidifier - Munters Rotor Principle





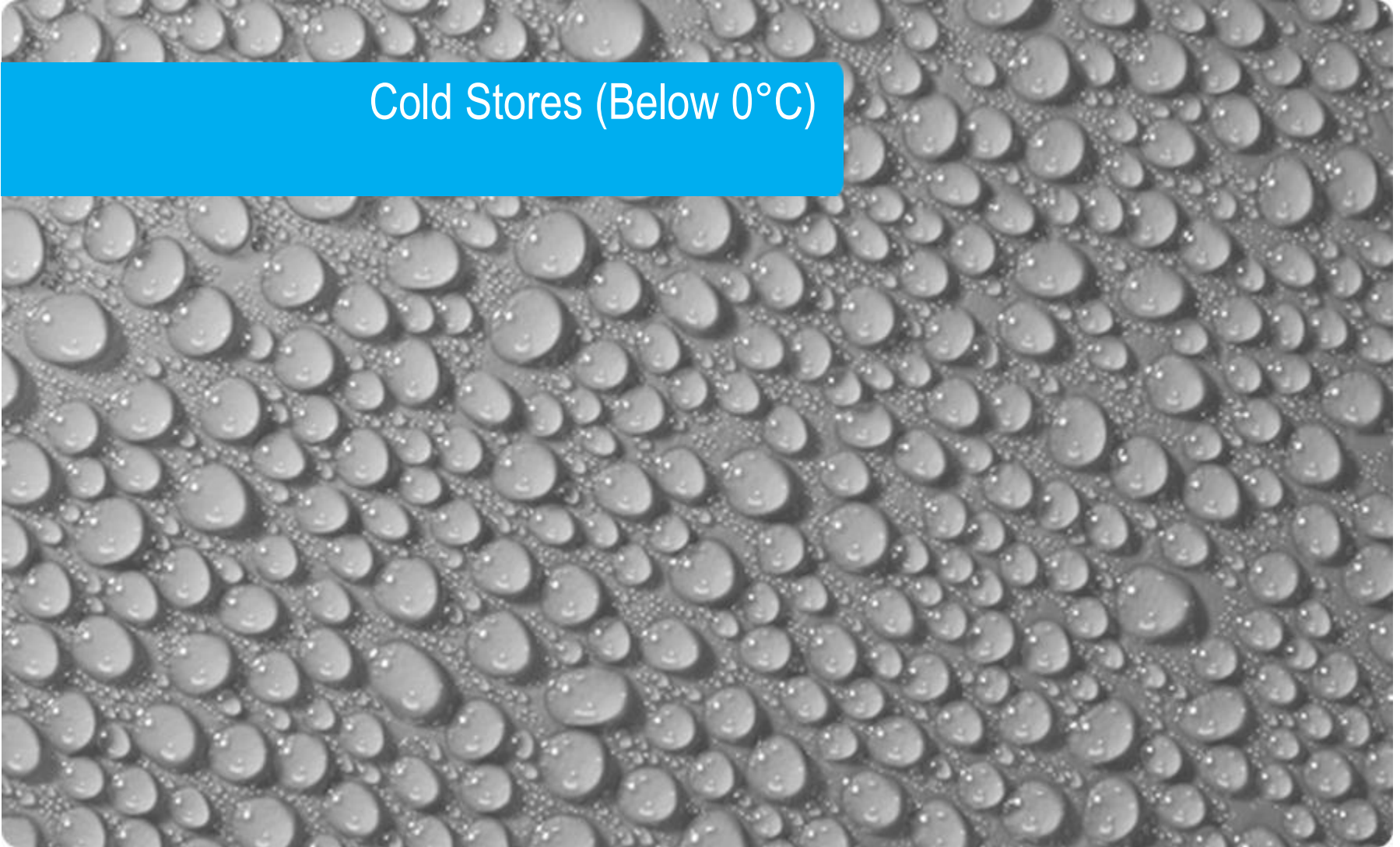
# Silica Gel

- A non-crystalline (amorph) silicon dioxide based material which has water molecules in its composition. Adsorption takes place in cavities and pores.





Cold Stores (Below 0°C)





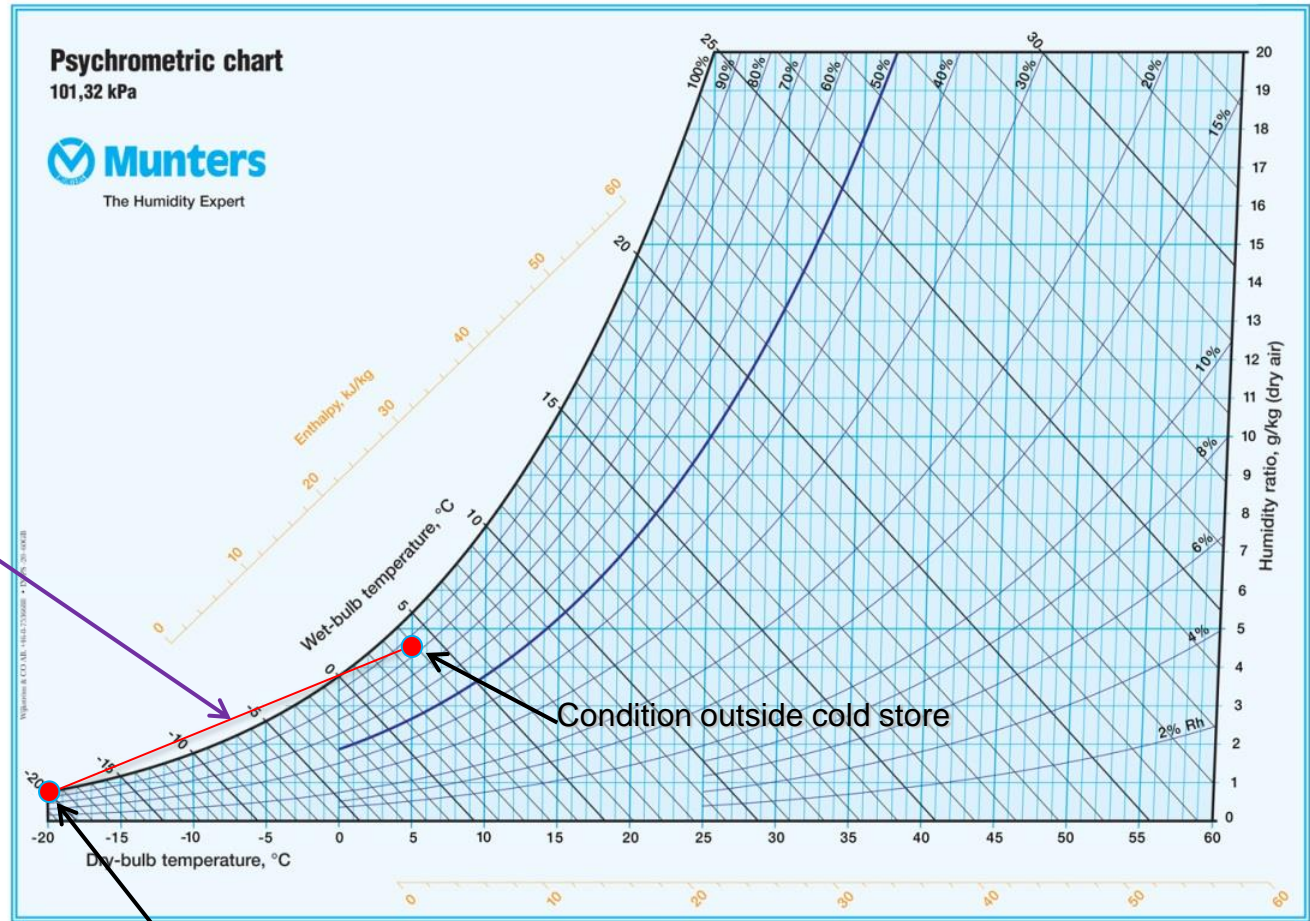
## Cold Store problems have two dimensions....





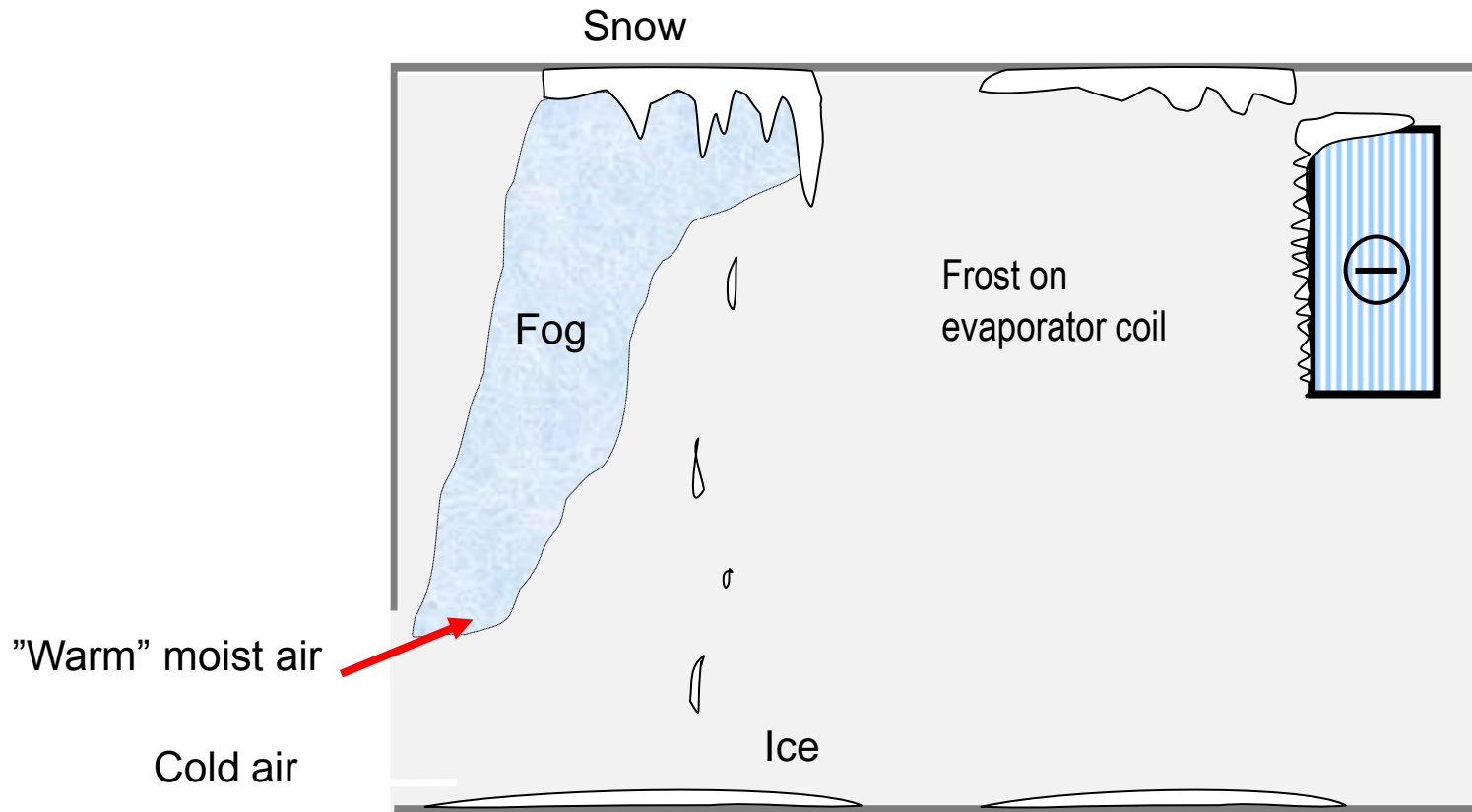
# Dewpoint and Cold Stores

The line is cutting through the saturation line  
Water vapour turns into fog, below 0°C  
into ice particles





## In the Cold Store





## In the Cold Store

- High outside humidity causes ice formation inside Cold Store on cold surfaces
  - on the ceiling
  - the evaporator
  - on products, scaffolds and shelves
  - on entry door areas
- Ice formation on the ceiling also causes “snow” which falls down on the floor and on products
  - Ice on the floor (snow compressed by forklifts, pallet trucks, handling equipment)
  - Additional ice formation on products
- Fog around the door area

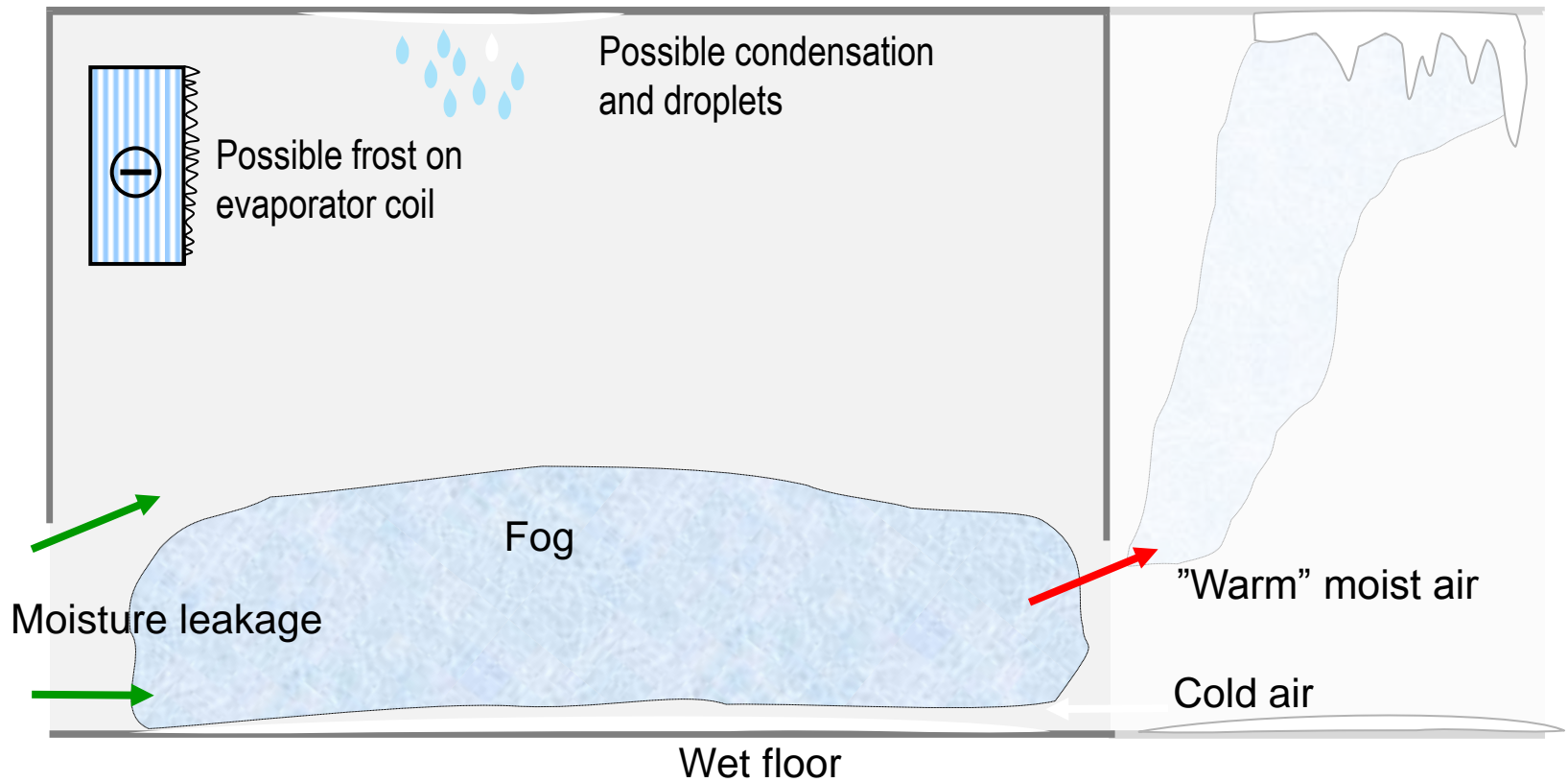


## In the Cold Store

- Ice on the evaporator forms an insulated layer on the coil (COP degradation)
  - Reduced efficiency of the refrigeration process – increased energy consumption
  - Growing layers will reduce and ultimately block the airflow through the coil – again reducing efficiency of the refrigeration process
- Fog, Ice and Snow
  - SAFETY HAZARD
    - Slippery floors
      - Persons - personal hazard (people can slip)
      - Forklifts collisions with objects such as scaffolds/shelves and doors or with people
    - In the doors - enhanced chance of accident due to reduced visibility
      - Fog
      - Iced up flap doors - collisions with people or other forklifts
  - CONTAMINATION HAZARD - possible contamination of products by dirty snow
  - Accelerated degradation of cardboard packaging materials when it leaves the cold store
  - Decreased readability of bar codes (laser deflection on ice crystals)



## Outside the Cold Store





## Outside the Cold Store

- Combination of cold air coming from Cold Store, moisture leakage from outside and refrigeration creates excessive RH%
  - SAFETY HAZARD
    - Wet slippery floors - personnel hazard (people can slip)
    - Fog - reduced visibility leading to collisions with people or other forklifts
  - CONTAMINATION HAZARD
    - Possible condensation compromises hygiene
- Conditions outside the Cold Store drive the problems inside the Cold Store (earlier slides)







## Existing customer strategies inside Cold Stores

- Existing solution strategies solve only parts of the problem and are temporary and/or costly
- Defrost cycles for evaporators
  - Costs energy
  - Loss of cold store condition
- Floor heating near the door (up to 8-10 kW)
- Manually removing ice/snow for the cold store (remove from walls, floors, product)
  - Labour intensive
  - Damage to cold store structure



## Benefits of dehumidification

- Less damage to the cold store and loading areas
  - No ice scraping
  - Less condensation damage
  - Better performance of automated equipment and sensors
  - Special impact on automated / robotic cold stores
  - Less corrosion damage
  - Cardboard packing boxes remain in better shape
- Higher speed of product movement
  - Better visibility
  - No slippery floors
  - Optimal bar code or label reading
  - Improved picking rates and handling of boxes
- Spaces faster to clean
  - Drying after cleaning

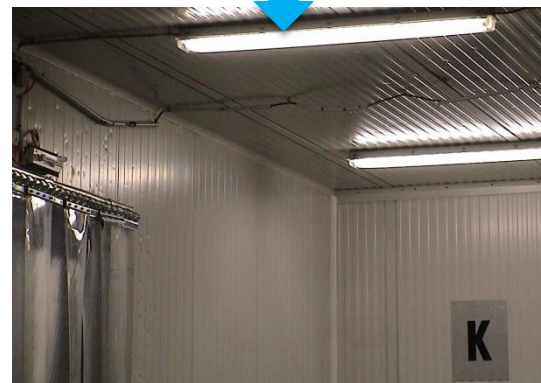


## Benefits of dehumidification

- Keeping ice and condensation away from evaporator coils
  - Higher efficiency of the evaporator (COP)
    - Less latent load for the coils
    - Allows more economic setting for refrigeration system
  - Time between defrost considerably lengthened
  - Less energy loss due to defrost (can take up to 15% of the total energy consumption, in some cases reduced to 3%)
- No floor heating (up to 8-10 kW) needed near door (common in newer cold stores)
- Energy savings are bonus on top of the improvements in safety, hygiene and efficiency



## Before and after dehumidification



Because of ACTIVE moisture removal capacity ice formation is sublimated  
(Ice changes phase and turns directly into vapour without passing through the liquid phase)











Chilled Stores (Above 0°C)





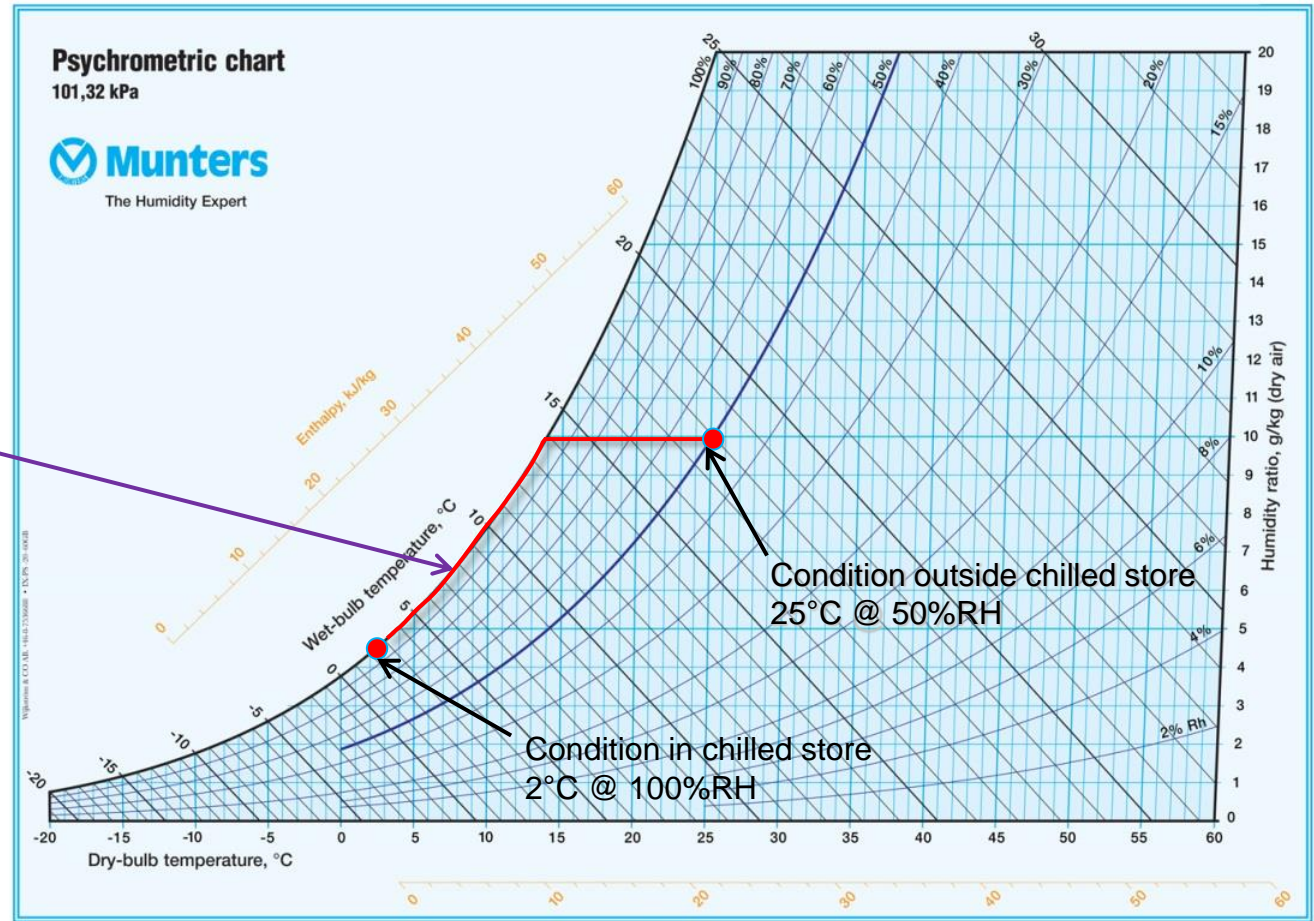
## Particular Challenges with Chilled Stores

- Typically in the 2 to 8°C temperature range
- If humidity is not controlled then RH within the chilled space can be >90%
- Cold surfaces will allow condensation to occur
- If this is left untreated additional issues can arise
- Easy to treat with dehumidification



# Dewpoint and Chilled Stores

The line hits the saturation line  
Water vapour turns  
into water and  
condenses out on  
cold surfaces





## Chillers, Humidity and Cold Surfaces





## Chillers, Humidity and Cold Surfaces

- Water droplets form on the lighting fittings, ceiling or chiller units
- These droplets occasionally drop onto boxes of vaccine below.
- Mould, bacteria or yeast growths in the water droplets would be transferred onto the boxes.
- If enough droplets were to fall on a particular box in the same location over time, contaminants could enter the box and come in contact with the sealed vaccines inside.





## Water Activity and Microbial Growth

- The growth and metabolism of microorganisms demand the presence of water in an available form, which is measured as water activity,  $a_w$
- The  $a_w$  of a solution equals the ratio of the water vapour pressure of the solution ( $p$ ) to that of pure water ( $p_0$ ) at the same temperature. When a solution becomes more concentrated, vapour pressure decreases and the  $a_w$  drops from a maximum value of 1 for pure water.
- Many microorganisms, including pathogenic bacteria, grow most rapidly at levels of  $a_w$  in the range of 0.99 – 0.98. Below this  $a_w$  the growth rate decreases and the length of the lag phase increases
- No microorganisms can grow at an  $a_w < 0.50$



## Examples of Water Activity and Microbial Growth

Substance	$a_w$
Distilled Water	1.00
Tap water	0.99
Saturated NaCl solution	0.75
Typical indoor air	0.5 - 0.7

Microorganism Inhibited	$a_w$
Most bacteria	0.97 – 0.85
Most moulds	0.80
Xerophilic molds and yeasts	0.75 - 0.80
Yeasts	0.70 - 0.75
Osmophilic yeasts	0.65 - 0.70
Xerophilic molds, osmophilic yeasts	0.60 - 0.65
No microbial proliferation	0.50



## Moulds

- Moisture plays an important role as the base for metabolism and therefore for any growth
- Moulds do not need droplets of water to form - water vapor concentrations of  $> 80\%$  relative humidity are sufficient.
- Once established, some moulds can transport free water to dry areas. (For example, dry rot)
- Moulds can be highly hygroscopic due to large surface area. The result is that water molecules are filtered from the air (thawing effect). This process is particularly enhanced when mould develops on cold walls.



## In closing

Humidity is present in all environments

Dehumidification can deliver the following benefits

- Eliminate Condensation (water) and frost formation (ice – i.e. condensation below 0°C)
- Prevent corrosion of metals
- Prevent influence of moisture on resistance values (electronic malfunctions)
- Stop mould formation and improve hygiene
- Prevent property and quality change of materials and substances





Thank you for your attention  
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