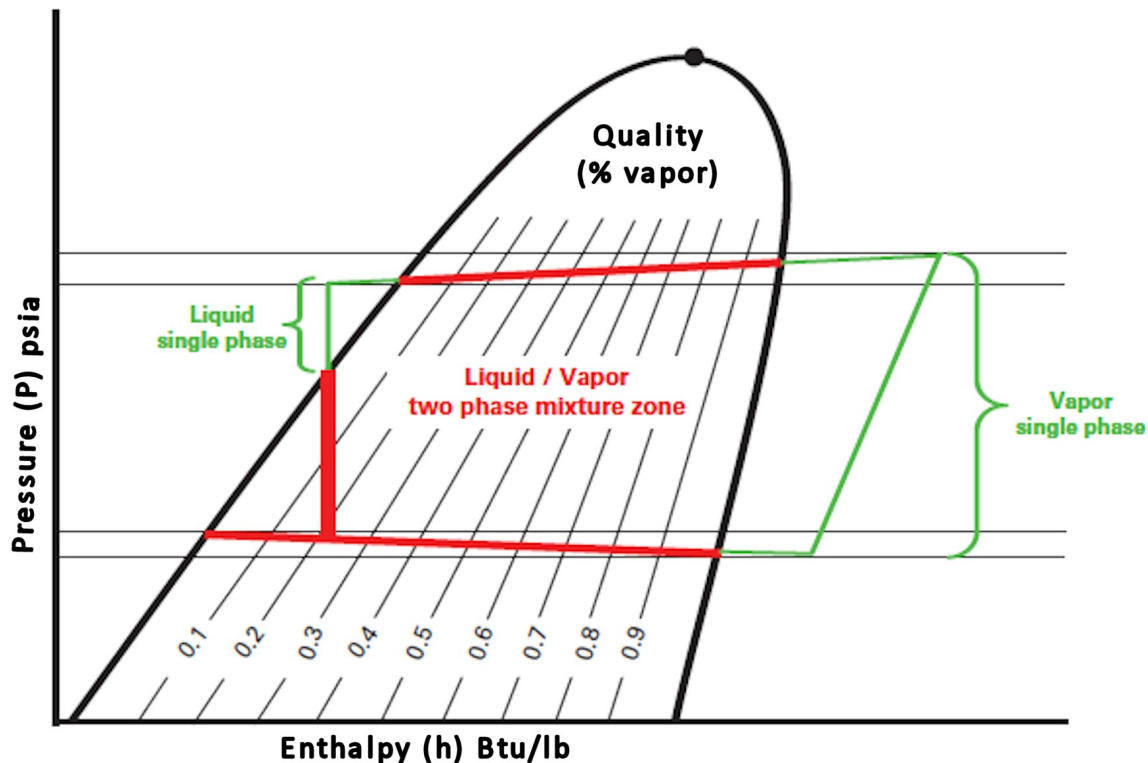


De-Mystifying Fractionation

Vapor compression systems that contain a 400 or 500 series refrigerant.



Fractionation: A shift in composition of a refrigerant blend by preferential evaporation of the more volatile component or condensation of the less volatile component.

System in Operation

A shift in refrigerant composition (fractionation) will occur whenever there is a refrigerant leak in the **Liquid and Vapor (two phase)** region of an operating system. Therefore the remaining refrigerant's composition is not as formulated, and its thermodynamic performance could be affected. If a refrigerant leak occurs in the **Vapor or Liquid (single phase)** region there will be no shift in refrigerant composition as the refrigerant is in a single phase condition and no shift will occur.

System Off

A shift in refrigeration composition (fractionation) will occur whenever there is a refrigerant leak in the system regardless of the leak's location. Therefore the remaining refrigerant's composition is not as formulated and its thermodynamic performance could be affected.

Reprinted / adapted from Sporlan Cold W.A.R. Issue 009