



PROOF IN PRACTICE

A COASTAL FLORIDA PIZZERIA A1-A2L
CONVERSION OFFERS REAL WORLD CONFIDENCE.

Baker®

TWC
TWC SERVICES

HEATCRAFT™
Refrigeration Products

PROJECT SNAPSHOT



LOCATION

V's Pizza – 2709 Sadler Rd,
Fernandina Beach, Fla. 32034



APPLICATION

Walk-in freezer



INSTALLER

TWC Services



DISTRIBUTOR

Baker Distributing Company



INSTALL DATE

February 17, 2026



CONVERSION DATE

February 23, 2026



EQUIPMENT

Half through six horsepower
Heatcraft dual-refrigerant
condensing unit, 1-fan Bohn unit
cooler with intelliGen™



INITIAL REFRIGERANT

R-448A (A1)



POST-CONVERSION REFRIGERANT

R-454A (A2L)



THE RIGHT CONDITION FOR CHANGE

When TWC Services arrived at V's Pizza in Fernandina Beach, Fla., the goal was straightforward: replace an aging A1 refrigeration system with Heatcraft's new dual-refrigerant class equipment and then convert it to A2L refrigerant a week later. What the project set out to prove was that the conversion itself, from A1 to A2L, could be done in a real working environment, confidently and without disruption.

V's Pizza sits at 2709 Sadler Rd in Fernandina Beach, close enough to the water that the coast isn't just a backdrop but a daily operational reality. Salt air, humidity and the relentless thermal demands of a coastal Florida climate put extra stress on refrigeration systems. When the existing A1 equipment could no longer keep pace with those conditions or the direction the industry was heading, it became clear that the right move wasn't to patch the system. It was to replace it.

The conversion opportunity landed with the right person. Raj Kainth, project manager for TWC Services, had been V's Pizza's primary service

provider for over a year. He knew the space, understood the conditions and had already built a working relationship with Daniel Ring, V's Pizza's manager, that went well beyond service calls. The easy path would have been a straight A2L install and done. But Heatcraft's dual-refrigerant class equipment opened a different door — the chance to convert an existing system in a live commercial setting and show the industry exactly what that process looks like from start to finish.

WHY A CONVERSION

Heatcraft's dual-refrigerant class equipment gave the team options. The easy path would have been a straight A2L install and done. Instead, they chose to install the system on A1 first and return a week later to complete the conversion — not as a scheduling convenience but as a deliberate opportunity to give contractors firsthand experience of exactly what this process looks like in a working commercial environment. Not in a training room. Not on a demo unit. On a live system, inside a restaurant that had meals to keep cold.

A2L: WHY IT MATTERS

A2L refrigerants offer lower global warming potential (GWP) than A1 refrigerants and they provide consistent efficiency across climates including the high-humidity coastal environments that put the most stress on equipment. In many applications, they outperform traditional units on energy efficiency, translating to lower operational costs over time. As the EPA AIM Act continues to drive HFC phasedowns, operators who move now do so on their own terms and timeline rather than under regulatory pressure.

MORE THAN A RESTAURANT

For Dave Villmow, chief growth officer at V's Pizza, the decision to move forward came down to something simple. The cooler is the heart of the restaurant. And the restaurant is the engine behind something much bigger.

Keeping products safe is our business, and with the cooler being the heart of the restaurant, it was easy to say yes.

— Dave Villmow, chief growth officer, V's Pizza



V FOR VICTORY

V for Victory is a non-profit built around supporting families fighting cancer. V's Pizza delivers meals and handles the everyday things that fall apart when a family is in crisis, the lawn that needs cutting and the errands that pile up, so that no one must choose between being at a bedside and keeping a household together. For Dave and the team at V's Pizza, this mission drives every business decision. The restaurant doesn't just fund the charity; the charity gives the restaurant its purpose.

It's in that context that the decision to upgrade carries its full weight. A failed cooler isn't just a repair bill. It's a disruption to something families in need count on.





KEY CONVERSION HIGHLIGHTS

Quick turnaround: From start to restart in about an hour

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No new system needed: Convert with Refrigeration Detection System (RDS) kit

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Designed for Contractors: Safety and installation process built with the technician in mind

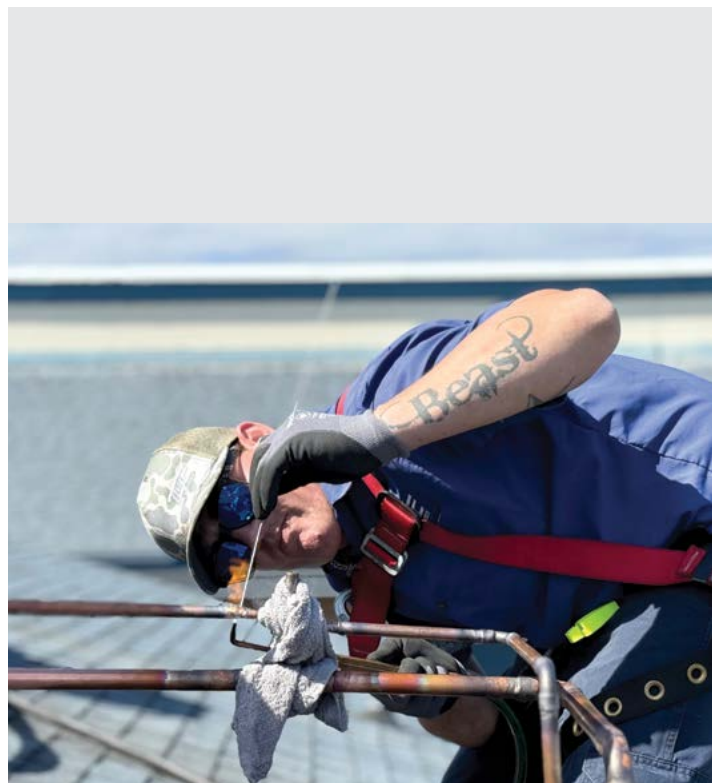
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Cost-effective: Less labor and downtime without a full system replacement

THE FOUNDATION

On February 17, 2026, the TWC Services crew arrived at V's Pizza with a clear job in front of them: pull the old system, set the new one and get the walk-in back to temperature. Raj had prepped the site and coordinated logistics with Baker Distributing Company ahead of time, so when lead installer James Johnson and lead technician Douglas Atkins started pulling the existing equipment, the new Heatcraft dual-refrigerant class system was staged and ready to go.

The installation was clean. The system was charged with R-448A to establish a baseline, not because that's where it would finish, but because that's where the real story needed to start. By that afternoon the walk-in reached optimal temperature and was holding it. Phase one was done.



THE TRANSITION

Eight days later the TWC Services crew was back at V's Pizza. Same system. Different job. This time they were converting it from R-448A, an A1 refrigerant, to R-454A, the A2L refrigerant supplied by Chemours. The goal wasn't just to flip the refrigerant. It was to prove, in a real working restaurant, that this conversion could be done confidently.

They started by shutting the system down and recovering the R-448A. Then Douglas and James split the work. Inside the walk-in, Douglas installed RDS kit, a sensor board, relay and alarm mechanism that automatically isolates refrigerant flow and triggers the appropriate shutoffs if a leak is detected. It's a required safety feature for A2L refrigerants and the way it integrated into the Heatcraft system made the install straightforward.

The RDS wiring required some attention, not because it was difficult but because it was new territory. Outside the cooler, James mounted the safety shutoff valve (SSOV) and check valve on the liquid and suction lines, additional safeguards required under UL 60335-2-89. The components were pre-engineered to fit. No improvising. No modifications. Just the steps.

Once both installs were complete, the system was recharged with R-454A, fitted with new A2L refrigerant labels and the intelliGen controller was updated. The RDS was automatically

detected, the system ran its diagnostic check and the walk-in was back up.

WHAT THE TECHNICIANS LEARNED

Going in, Douglas and James knew the job but the RDS wiring was new territory. What they found was that the components were pre-engineered to fit the system they'd installed the week before. There was no guessing. The process was sequential and the team moved through it steadily. The one moment that required a pause: after completing the RDS wiring, the intelliGen controller needed a manual restart to properly sync with the updated refrigerant designation. Once they knew that step, everything locked in. Both technicians left the job knowing they could do it again. Faster. On their own.

• **Converting to A2L is more efficient with slight changes from the standard installation process.**

— Douglas Atkins, lead technician, TWC Services





Chemours™

WHY CHEMOURS R-454A

When it came time to select a refrigerant partner for this conversion, the choice was straightforward. Chemours and Heatcraft share a commitment to helping the industry navigate the refrigerant transition responsibly, with products that are field-ready, contractor-friendly and built for the real-world conditions technicians face every day.

OPTEON™ XL40 (R-454A)

R-454A is a low-GWP (GWP 238) hydrofluoro-olefin (HFO) based refrigerant designed as a high-performance

alternative to higher-GWP HFCs such as R-404A. With a GWP under 300 it meets regulatory requirements for condensing units with charge sizes under 200lbs while delivering the reliable performance operators expect.

Of the A2L refrigerants available today, R-454A is the closest performance match to R-404A, with added benefits of higher energy efficiency and strong cooling capacity. Its performance is also comparable to R-448A and R-449A, enabling operators to achieve similar or improved results using existing system design without major modifications.

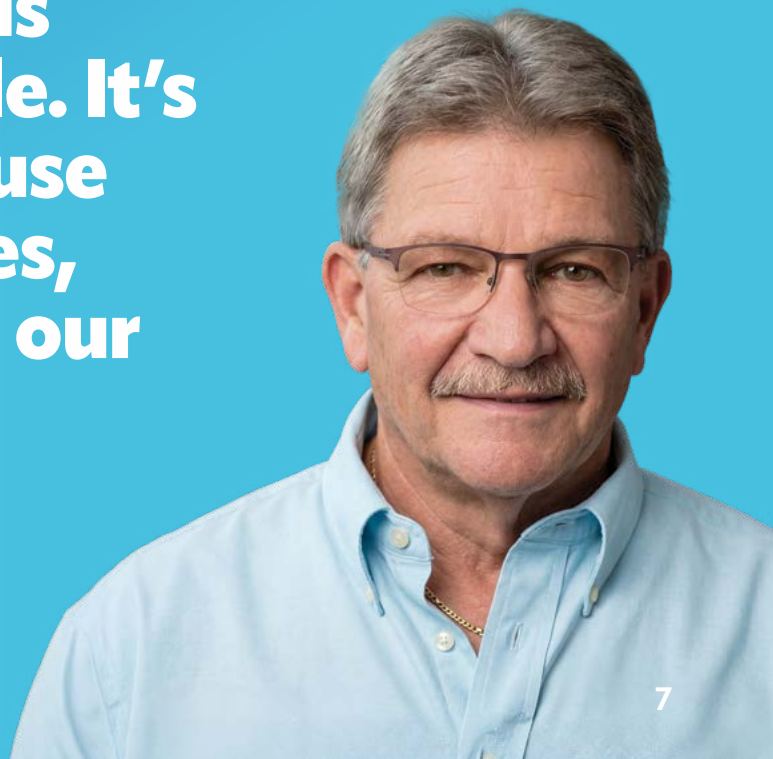
This wasn't a standard equipment run for Baker. It was an invitation to be present for exactly the kind of real-world validation the industry has been waiting for. TWC Services was the first customer that came to mind. A loyal Baker customer for many years, they were the right team

for the job. Chemours was a natural fit as well, supplying the R-454A and running the efficiency analysis between refrigerants to document what the conversion delivered. From there, coordination between all three parties was seamless.

“Having a real-life, real-time example of this process is invaluable. It's something we can use to educate ourselves, our employees and our customers.”

— Jeff Kearns, sales manager, Baker Distributing Company

Baker®



A FRONT ROW SEAT TO THE FUTURE

WHAT THIS CONVERSION REPRESENTS

For contractors and operators who may be on the fence, what happened at V's Pizza is worth paying attention to. This wasn't a demo. It was a live commercial kitchen with real food to keep cold and a non-profit counting on it staying that way. The conversion was done in a single day, on a system that had been running on A1 refrigerant the week before, by a crew who had never done this specific conversion before.

THEY FINISHED CONFIDENT

This conversion demonstrates the path ahead is more straightforward than it might seem. The right equipment, the right refrigerant and the right team make all the difference.



See What's Next in Refrigeration

