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# Heat Load for the ABC House

Jonathan Odim **Swarthmore** E90 Advisor: Carr Everbach Senior Engineering Design Project (continued from E84 Heat Transfer Project) Spring 2023

# Abstract

Following the protocol set forth in the ASHRAE 2021 Fundamentals Handbook, this project modeled the heating load of the house for a design season (winter). This project reports the heating load calculation for a 1960 residential dwelling used as student housing in Swarthmore, PA. The infiltration, window, door, attic, 1st-3rd floor, and basement loads were found to be 5641 kW, 3239 kW, 273 kW, 262 kW, 4073 kW, and 514 kW respectively: resulting in a total design season heat load of 14001 kW. The three biggest contributors to the seasonal heat load were Infiltration, Window, and Wall load (40.3%, 29.1%, and 23.1% of total heat load respectively). Window and insulation replacement were the two most feasible reduction methods, with estimated installation costs of \$16800 and ~\$2,000 respectively. The following sections of this report include details on the methods used as well as a discussion of the load calculation and suggestion for heat load reduction.

# **Introduction**

In the 1950s and 60s (when the ABC House was erected) construction options were extremely limited and technicians had to calculate the Joule heating and cooling loads of the house manually. The general elements of consideration included looking at walls' surface area, insulation type, # of residents, outer temperature, and have remained unchanged over the years. The only complication is the abundance of choice (making it a hassle to manually keep track of things).

Understanding the heat load of an enclosure is essential for maintaining thermal homeostasis. Houses are designed to maintain stable temperatures despite fluctuations in environmental temperatures. In the summer, when it's hot, the aim is to prevent heat energy from coming in. In the winter, when it's cold, the aim is to prevent heat energy from leaving. This is thought through during the house design process where each material and its thermal resistance/absorptivity is carefully considered.

A well-constructed house can result in hundreds of dollars of monthly savings for residents by reducing their heating bills. Over time (generally 6-12 years) energy savings can completely amortize the extra fixed costs of using more energy efficient materials.

This year, I am serving as a residential assistant to the ABC Strath Haven house. The ABC program aims to "increase substantially the number of well-educated young people of color who are capable of assuming positions of responsibility and leadership in American society." As a non-profit organization, the ABC Strath Haven branch relies on donations and the charity of the Swarthmore Borough Residents to sustain its students.

"The ABC Strath Haven House is a Victorian-era home tucked in the heart of Swarthmore. The home is owned by the Swarthmore Presbyterian Church, which provides the home and contributes to its capital improvements and upkeep for a nominal rent … The house is designed to accommodate two resident directors, two resident tutors, and eight students. In 2013 and 2014, extensive renovations were done to the first and second floors of the house. " (ABC Strath Haven)

This project aims to:

- 1) Evaluate the heating load required for a typical winter season.
- 2) Identify areas of improvement that will result in load reduction.
- 3) Provide a cost/benefit breakdown of potential house improvements.
- 4) Estimate the heat load reduction of said improvements based on the model.

If adopted, these changes will lead to financial savings that can be redirected to more productive goals of the ABC program.

### History of Thermal Analysis in Residential Buildings

Early residential construction practices (pre-1950's) dictated, little attention should be paid to thermal performance. Buildings were typically poorly insulated and had high rates of air infiltration, leading to discomfort and energy waste.

High fuel costs due to the oil embargos during the 1970's placed an increased importance on energy efficiency in order to reduce building maintenance costs. This prompted the development of thermal analysis tools, like the Building Energy Analysis Program (BEAP).

In the 1980s and 1990s, this kind of computer simulation software became more widely available, and allowed more accurate thermal analysis of buildings. EnergyPlus is one such tool that is still widely used today. Additionally, there has been increased attention on the importance of sustainable design to reducing buildings' carbon footprint.

# Methods

### Theory

Conduction and convection were the two modes of heat transfer considered for this calculation. Radiative gain was ignored because it would lessen the calculated winter heat load and this model aimed to determine the conservative heat load of the house during a typical January design day.

### Conductive Heat Transfer

Conduction involves the transfer of thermal energy due to random, translational motion of the molecules in a material or surface. The energy is diffusing across the surface can be quantified by the rate equation (Fourier's law):

$$
q = k \frac{A}{L} \nabla T
$$
 (Equation 1)

### Convective Heat Transfer

Convection involves both diffusive heat transfer, as well as heat transfer due to bulk motion of the fluid/medium. In this case free (not driven by an external means) convection occurs between the air (outside and inside the house) the house's exposed surfaces. The convective heat transfer rate equation is expressed as follows:

$$
q = hA \nabla T
$$
 (Equation 2)

### Thermal Resistivity and the U Factor

The thermal resistivity of a material measures its ability to resist heat transfer. The U-Factor is a measure of a material/object's ability to transmit heat: its thermal conductance. It follows that this measurement is the reciprocal of the thermal resistance of said material. We can relate the two using the following equality:

$$
R_{t} = \sum R_{total} = \sum R_{conduction} + \sum R_{convection} = \frac{\Delta T}{q} = \frac{1}{UA}
$$
 (Equation 3)

The incorporation of thermal resistivity produces the following generalized heat transfer equation utilized during heat load calculation:

$$
q = UA\Delta T = \frac{\Delta T}{R_t}
$$
 (Equation 4)

This equation shows how the heat transferred through a medium is directly proportional the temperature gradient and surface area of said medium.

### Building Design Details

The ABC house currently has 8 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms. The water boiler located in the basement is responsible for heating during the winter. Below are pictures of the floor plans for each floor of the house.



**Figure 1: Basement Floor Plan**



Figure 2: Main Floor Plan



Figure 3: 2nd Floor Plan



**Figure 4: Attic Floor Plan**



**Figure 5**: Heat Load Model

*This figure shows the model used to calculate the total heat load of the house. The house was divided into 3 sections: the attic, floors 1-3, and the basement. The attic and basement were treated as adjacent, unheated buffer spaces. The attic roof, attic floor, walls, windows, doors, basement ceiling, basement walls, and basement floor were all elements of this calculation.*

## Approach

- 1) Inventory and measure the house
- 2) Determine design conditions
- 3) Propose a model for heat transfer
- 4) Calculate the heat load during a design season (based on ASHRAE guidelines)
- 5) Compare load estimate against energy/heat bill data
- 6) Identify three areas with greatest potential to improve heat retention
- 7) Propose an array of house modifications and project their amortization window
- 8) Propose upgraded heating system with a prediction of its new heating load

## ABET Design Parameters

### **Constraints**

The project budget was the primary constraint impacting this project. Limited funding meant that I couldn't conduct a blower door test to quantify the air-tightness of the house (pertains to the infiltration load calculation). Additionally, thermal cameras could have been used to get more precise heat loss data (wouldn't have to rely on an instantaneous heat loss assumption).

### Requirements

This project's requirements included:

ASHRAE Residential Heat Load Calculation formalisms found in Appendix Item A.

and

Estimated heat load of housing components to determine low hanging fruit of weatherization options

### Evaluation

This project satisfied my initial aims. I was able to use the guidelines provided by the ASHRAE Fundamentals Handbook to determine a reasonable, worst-case scenario, winter heat load of the ABC house and provide insight into the cost-efficiency of heat retention modifications for the house.

### Professional Standards and Codes

- Heat Loss Calculation Guide [HYDI H-22]
- Peak Cooling and Heating Load Calculation in Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings [ANSI/ASHRAE/ACCA 183-2007 (RA14)]
- Residential Load Calculations [ANSI/ACCA 2 Manual J-2016]

- Thermal Energy Storage [ACCA 2005]

A comprehensive list of ASHRAE Standards that were applicable to my project are listed in Appendix Item C.

## Seasonal Design Conditions



### **Table 1**: Component Areas, U-Factors, and Temperature Gradients



*Table 1, describes each element of the ABC pertinent to the heat load calculation: surface area, U-Factor, temperature gradient, and construction. The Internal temperatures of adjacent buffer spaces (basement and attic) were not measured. This is denoted by a ' -' .*



#### **Table 2**: Design Month Parameters

*Table 2 describes the parameters of the design season that were taken into consideration for the heat load calculation. DegTemperatures and wind speed were averaged from last [January's](https://www.worldweatheronline.com/swarthmore-weather-averages/pennsylvania/us.aspx) [meteorological](https://www.worldweatheronline.com/swarthmore-weather-averages/pennsylvania/us.aspx) data (Appendix C).*

## **Results**

<b>Heat Load Components</b>	<b>ACH</b>	<b>IDF</b>	Average	Average Load as % of Total
<b>Infiltration Load</b>	7967	3315	5641	0.40
Window Load	3239	3239	3239	0.23
Door Load	273	273	273	0.02
Attic Load	262	262	262	0.02
IFI 1-3 Load	4073	4073	4073	0.29
<b>Basement Load</b>	514	514	514	0.04
[Air Changes] Total (W)	16327	11675	14001	1.00

**Table 3**: Load (W) Breakdown for each Element of the House

*Table 3: Breakdowns of the heat load generated by the design temperature gradient across each house element is described above. The calculation was conducted according to Equation 4. The basement and attic calculations were slightly more complicated.*

*The basement heat load was calculated as follows:*

$$
(Eq. 6) \ q \ = \ UA\Delta T \ = \frac{\Delta T}{R_t} \ \Rightarrow \ \frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{R_{\text{ceiling}}A_{\text{ceiling}} + (1/R_{\text{Walls}}A_{\text{Walls}} + 1/R_{\text{Floor}}A_{\text{Floor}})^{-1}} = \frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{(U_{\text{ceiling}}A_{\text{ceiling}})^{-1} + (U_{\text{Walls}}A_{\text{Walls}} + U_{\text{Floor}}A_{\text{Floor}})^{-1}} = \frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{(U_{\text{ceiling}}A_{\text{Ceiling}})^{-1} + (U_{\text{Walls}}A_{\text{Walls}} + U_{\text{Floor}}A_{\text{
$$

*The attic load was calculated similarly:*

 $(Eq. 6) q = UA\Delta T = \frac{\Delta T}{R}$  $\frac{\Delta T}{R_t}$   $\Rightarrow$   $\frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{R_{Root}A_{Root}+R_{floor}A}$  $\frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{R_{Root}A_{Root} + R_{floor}A_{floor}} = \frac{24.91 - 0\,^{\circ}\text{C}}{(U_{post}A_{post})}^{-1} + (U_{prior})}$  $(U_{Root}A_{Root})^{-1}$  +  $(U_{floor}A_{Flow})^{-1}$ 

> 24.91 − 8 (℃)  $\frac{24.91 - 6(C)}{(0.091*122.00)^{-1} + (1.020*125.44)^{-1} (°C/W)} = 261.7 W$



#### **Table 4: Heat Load Conversion to kWh**

*Heat Loads were converted to kWh by multiplying by the total seasonal HDD value shown in Table 2.*

**Table 5:** Infiltrative Driving Force (IDF) Method for Calculating Infiltration Load



Table 5 details the process for calculating the Infiltration Heating Load via the IDF method described in the ASHRAE 2021 Fundamentals Handbook. The calculation was conducted as follows:  $A_{ul} = 2.800 \text{ cm}^2/\text{m}^2 (Appendix B), A_{es} = 2 * 11.2 * (12 + 13) = 560 \text{ m}^2 (Table 1)$  $Al = A_{ul} * A_{es} = 1568 \text{ cm}^2 \text{ \& } IDF = .069 \text{ L/s} * \text{ cm}^2 (Appendix B); Q_i = Al * IDF = 108.19 \text{ L/s}$  $Q_{v_i,s,h} = C_s * Q_{vi} * ΔT = 1.230 (W * s/L * °C) * 108.19(L/s) * (24.91 - 8) °C) (Table 1 & Appendix B)$  $= 3314.93 W$ 

#### **Table 6:** Air Change (ACH) Method for Calculating Infiltration Load





*Table 6 details the process for calculating the Infiltration Heating Load via the Air Changes Method. The calculation is conducted as follows:*

 $ACH = 1.5$  Air Changes/h (Average Air Changes in a Residential Building  $-$  Engineering Toolbox)  $V = 3 * 2.4 * 203.5 m^3 (Table 1);$   $Q_i = ACH * V = 1539 m^3/h = 2198 * \frac{1000 L}{m^3}$  $\frac{3000L}{m^3} * \frac{1h}{3600s} = 610.5 L/s$  $Q_{v_i,s,h} = C_s * Q_{vi} * ΔT = 1.230 (W * s/L * °C) * 610.5(L/s) * 24.91 (°C) (Table 1 & Appendix B)$  $= 18705.29 W$ 

\*The large value of Qvi,s,h indicates that the ACH used is likely an order of magnitude larger than it should be (since the other independent measurements: house volume, temperature gradient, and air sensible heat factor are likely accurate)

### *(Include Cost/Benefit and HL reduction table) as well as 3D mock-up of House w. Heat pump)*



**Table 7:** Annual Energy Savings Based on State Residential Data

Table 7 details housing modification options to combat the high Infiltrative/Window/Wall heat loads of the house.

# **Discussion**

**Table 3**, shows a breakdown of the heat load by element. The heat loads determined by the two infiltration estimation methods were:

- 1) Total + ACH Infiltration: <sup>46775</sup> kW
- 2) Total + IDF Infiltration: <sup>33447</sup> kW

These heat loads were averaged to 40111 kW, which agrees closely with the check figure of 41909 kW determined by extracting heating fuel usage data from prior heating bills. A blower door test could be used to provide a more accurate measurement of the air-leakage of the buildings which would reduce the uncertainty inherent in the infiltration estimation methods used.



*Figure 5: Each house component's percent contribution to the total house heat load is detailed above*

Figure 5 shows that the floor 1-3, infiltration, and window loads were the three biggest contributors to the total heating load of the house (responsible for 40.3%, 29.1%, and 23.1% of the total heat load respectively). This information suggests that increasing the thermal resistance of the walls or windows will significantly reduce the overall heating load of the house. Since wall renovation is likely expensive, it stands to reason that window or insulation replacement may be the most cost effective renovation option. Table 7 gives a succinct breakdown of the cost-effectiveness of various energy saving modifications. According to wall insulation quotes from Forbes Home, wall insulation replacement will cost between \$2.35 and \$3.25/sq. ft. (\$0.35 - \$0.50 material cost, \$1.50/sq. ft. to remove pre existing insulation, and \$0.50 - \$1.25 to install). Therefore, it would cost approximately between \$1527 - \$2112 (650 sq. ft. \* \$2.35 & \$3.25) to replace the insulation of the ABC House.

On the other hand, the average cost of replacing a mid-range double-hung window is \$600, per window replacement quotes on Forbes Homes. Thus, it would cost ~\$16800 (28 windows) to replace all the windows on the ABC House.

## Appendix

#### A) [Heat Load Calculation Sheet,](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/u/0/d/199SMrYJNdYGzXxqG0Ubq4cxq275jWvUOFdBP5xeER20/edit) [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/199SMrYJNdYGzXxqG0Ubq4cxq275jWvUOFd](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/199SMrYJNdYGzXxqG0Ubq4cxq275jWvUOFdBP5xeER20/edit?usp=sharing) [BP5xeER20/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/199SMrYJNdYGzXxqG0Ubq4cxq275jWvUOFdBP5xeER20/edit?usp=sharing)

#### B) ASHRAE Fundamentals 2021 Handbook (tables included below)





Values calculated for ASHRAE Standard 152 default duct system surface area using model of Francisco and Palmiter (1999). Values are provided as guidance only; losses can differ substantially for other conditions and configurations. Assumed surrounding temperatures:

Cooling (C):  $t_o = 35^{\circ}$ C,  $t_{antc} = 49^{\circ}$ C,  $t_b = 20^{\circ}$ C,  $t_{crand} = 22^{\circ}$ C Heating/furnace (H/F) and heating/heating pump (H/HP):  $t_o = 0^{\circ}$ C,  $t_{atric} = 0^{\circ}$ C,  $t_b = 18^{\circ}$ C,  $t_{crand} = 0^{\circ}$ C



**Heating 6.7 m/s** 

*where* 





 $H =$  building average stack height, m (typically 2.5 m per story)

Table 3 Unit Leakage Areas



#### Table 4 Evaluation of Exposed Surface Area







*Notes*:<br>**"**Themally broken sill [add 0.17 W/(m<sup>2.</sup>K) for non-themally broken sill]

<sup>b</sup>Non-thermally broken sill<br>°Nominal U-factors are through center of insulated panel before consideration of thermal bridges around edges of door sections and because of frame.

<b>Heating Design</b> Temperature, <sup>o</sup> C Н,			<b>Cooling Design</b> Temperature, °C						
m	$-40$	$-30$	$-20$	$-10$	0	10	30	35	40
2.5	0.10		0.095 0.086 0.077 0.069			0.060	0.031	0.035	0.040
3	0.11	0.10	0.093		0.083 0.072	0.061	0.032	0.038	0.043
4	0.14	0.12	0.11		0.093 0.079	0.065	0.034	0.042	0.049
5	0.16	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.086	0.069	0.036	0.046	0.055
6	0.18	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.093	0.072	0.039	0.050	0.061
7	0.20	0.17	0.15	0.12	0.10	0.075	0.041	0.051	0.068
8	0.22	0.19	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.079	0.043	0.058	0.074

Table 5 Typical IDF Values,  $L/(s \cdot cm^2)$ 

#### Table 2 Typical Fenestration Characteristics<sup>a</sup>



 $bID$  = Chapter 15 glazing type identifier.  $cU = U$ -factor, W/(m<sup>2</sup>·K).  $dSHGC$  = solar heat gain coefficient. <sup>a</sup>Data are from Chapter 15, Tables 4 and 14 for selected combinations.

C) ASHRAE Standards and Codes





#### D) Source for Swarthmore Weather Averages

https://www.worldweatheronline.com/swarthmore-weather-averages/pennsylvania/us.as  $px$ 

#### E) Infiltration/Ventilation Calculation

The sensible and latent heat loss from outdoor air infiltration and ventilation are calculated by determining the volumetric flow, Q, of outdoor air entering the building.

First the Air Leakage Rate is calculated based on the number of air exchanges per hour experienced by the building:

$$
Q_i = ACH * V
$$

 $\overline{Q}_i$  depends on:

- 1) The building effective leakage area and its distribution along surfaces and flues
- 2) The driving pressure caused by buoyancy and wind.

$$
Q_i = A_l I D F
$$

Additionally,

$$
A_{L} = A_{es} A_{ul}
$$

The infiltration driving force can be calculated as follows

$$
IDF = \frac{I_0 + H|\Delta t|(I_1 + I_2(A_{L,flue}/A_L))}{1000}
$$

<sup>~</sup>*here* 

 $I_0$ ,  $I_1$ ,  $I_2$  = coefficients, as follows:



 $H =$  building average stack height, m (typically 2.5 m per story)

Equation 10 (17.6) of the ASHRAE Handbook

However, an IDF value of 0.069 (Under the assumption that  $A_{L, true} = 0$ ) from Table 5 is used in this model





Unit Leakage Areas are calculated under the "leaky" construction assumption from Table 3 (since the house was built in the 60's)

<b>Construction</b>	<b>Description</b>	$A_{ul}$ , cm <sup>2</sup> /m <sup>2</sup>
Tight	Construction supervised by air-sealing specialist	0.7
Good	Carefully sealed construction by knowledgeable builder	1.4
Average	Typical current production housing	2.8
Leaky	Typical pre-1970 houses	5.6
Very leaky	Old houses in original condition	10.4

Table 3 Unit Leakage Areas

Table 3 (17.6) of the ASHRAE Handbook (Appendix B)

The ASHRAE Standard 62.2 specifies that residential buildings must have a required whole-building ventilation rate determined by the following equation

$$
Q_p = 0.15A_{cf} + 3.5(N_{br} + 1)
$$

Finally, the sensible heating ventilation/infiltration load (15) is calculated per the following ASHRAE guideline (here we assume that  $Q_{bal,hr}$ ,  $Q_{bal,oth}$ , &  $Q_{unbal} = 0$  [based on the prior assumption that the ventilation rate requirement provided above is satisfied]) :

> Ventilation/infiltration load. The cooling or heating load from ventilation and infiltration is calculated as follows:

$$
q_{vi,s} = C_s[Q_{vi} + (1 - \varepsilon_s)Q_{bal,hr} + Q_{bal,oth}] \Delta t
$$
 (15)

$$
q_{vi,l} = C_l(Q_{vi} + Q_{bal,oth})\Delta W \quad \text{(no HRV/ERV)} \tag{16}
$$

$$
q_{vi,t} = C_{t6} [Q_{vi} + (1 - \varepsilon_t) Q_{bal,hr} + Q_{bal,oth}] \Delta h \tag{17}
$$

$$
q_{vi,l} = q_{vi,t} - q_{vi,s} \tag{18}
$$

where

 $q_{vi,s}$  = sensible ventilation/infiltration load, W  $\varepsilon$ <sub>s</sub> = HRV/ERV sensible effectiveness  $Q_{bd,hr}$  = balanced ventilation flow rate via HRV/ERV equipment, L/s  $Q_{bal, \alpha h}$  = other balanced ventilation supply airflow rate, L/s  $\Delta t$  = indoor/outdoor temperature difference, K  $\Delta W$  = indoor/outdoor humidity ratio difference  $q_{\textit{vil}}$  = total ventilation/infiltration load, W  $\varepsilon$ <sub>r</sub> = HRV/ERV total effectiveness  $\Delta h$  = indoor/outdoor enthalpy difference, kJ/kg  $q_{vi,I}$  = latent ventilation/infiltration load, W Equations 15 - 18 from the ASHRAE Handbook (Appendix B)

# Nomenclature





## References

ABC Strath Haven. (2022) ABC Strath Haven Website, <https://abcstrathhaven.org>

ASHRAE Standard 62.1 ("Ventilation and Acceptable Indoor Air Quality in Residential Buildings") recommends homes receive no less than 0.35 air changes per hour of outdoor air to ensure adequate indoor air.

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