

# **BUILDINGENERGY BOSTON**

---

## **Thermal Resilience as a Retrofit Metric**

**Al Mitchell (Phius)**

**Curated by Tristan Grant (MaGrann Associates)**

---

**Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA) | March 19, 2024**



# Thermal Resilience As A Retrofit Metric

Al Mitchell

NESEA

March 19, 2024



# Outline

---

- Define Thermal Resilience
- Metrics
- Strategies
- Modeling protocol
- Graphs
- Conclusions



# What is Thermal Resilience?



# Literature Review

---

Evaluating thermal resilience of building designs using building performance simulation – A review of existing practices

Chun Yin Siu<sup>a,\*</sup>, William O'Brien<sup>b</sup>, Marianne Touchie<sup>a,c</sup>, Marianne Armstrong<sup>d</sup>, Abdelaziz Laouadi<sup>d</sup>, Abhishek Gaur<sup>d</sup>, Zahra Jandaghian<sup>d</sup>, Iain Macdonald<sup>d</sup>

**TOWARDS A STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORK FOR THERMAL RESILIENCE MODELING AND ANALYSIS**

Ted Kesik<sup>1</sup>, William O'Brien<sup>2</sup>, and Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto, Canada  
<sup>2</sup>Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

**Improving the passive survivability of residential buildings during extreme heat events in the Pacific Northwest**

Alexandra R. Rempel<sup>a,\*</sup>, Jackson Danis<sup>b</sup>, Alan W. Rempel<sup>c</sup>, Michael Fowler<sup>d</sup>, Sandipan Mishra<sup>e</sup>

**Evaluation of the Thermal Resilience of a Community Hub**

Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup> and Joel Good<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Toronto, ON, Canada

<sup>2</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Vancouver, BC, Canada



# Literature Review

---

Evaluating thermal resilience of building designs using building performance simulation – A review of existing practices

## **ASSESSING RESILIENCY AND PASSIVE SURVIVABILITY IN MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS**

Lisa M. White<sup>1</sup> and Graham S. Wright<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>PHIUS, Chicago, U.S.A

**MODELING AND ANALYSIS**

### **Evaluation of the Thermal Resilience**

Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup> and Ted Kesik<sup>1</sup>, William O'Brien<sup>2</sup>, and Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto, Canada

<sup>2</sup>Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

<sup>1</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Toronto, ON, Canada

<sup>2</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Vancouver, BC, Canada



# Literature Review

Evaluating thermal resilience of building designs using building performance simulation – A review of existing practices

Chun Yin Siu <sup>a,\*</sup>, William O'Brien <sup>b</sup>, Marianne Touchie <sup>a,c</sup>, Marianne Armstrong <sup>d</sup>, Abdelaziz Laouadi <sup>d</sup>, Abhishek Gaur <sup>d</sup>, Zahra Jandaghian <sup>d</sup>, Iain Macdonald <sup>d</sup>



HOURS OF SAFETY IN COLD WEATHER:  
A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING RESILIENCE IN  
BUILDING ENVELOPE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**Evaluation of the Thermal Resilience**

Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup> and Ted Kesik<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto, Canada  
<sup>2</sup>Department of Architecture, University of Toronto, Canada  
ASSESSING RESILIENCY AND PASSIVE SURVIVABILITY IN MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS

Ted Kesik<sup>1</sup>, William O'Brien<sup>2</sup>, and Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists,

<sup>2</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, Vancouver

Lisa M. White<sup>1</sup> and Graham S. Wright<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PHIUS, Chicago, U.S.A



# Literature Review

## Enhancing Resilience in Buildings Through Energy Efficiency

December 2022

nce of building designs using building  
A review of existing practices

<sup>b</sup>, Marianne Touchie <sup>a,c</sup>, Marianne Armstrong <sup>d</sup>,  
ur <sup>d</sup>, Zahra Jandaghian <sup>d</sup>, Iain Macdonald <sup>d</sup>



HOURS OF SAFETY IN COLD WEATHER:

A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING RESILIENCE IN  
BUILDING ENVELOPE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

**Evaluation of the Thermal Resilie**

Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup> and J

<sup>1</sup>Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto, Canada  
<sup>2</sup>Department: ASSESSING RESILIENCY AND PASSIVE SURVIVABILITY IN MULTIFAMILY BUILDINGS Canada

Ted Kesik<sup>1</sup>, William O'Brien<sup>2</sup>, and Aylin Ozkan<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists,  
<sup>2</sup>RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, \

Lisa M. White<sup>1</sup> and Graham S. Wright<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>PHIUS, Chicago, U.S.A





# LEED

---

## **Pilot-Credits IPpc100: *Passive Survivability and Back-up Power During Disruptions***

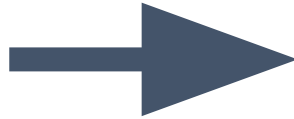
1. Option 1: Provide for Passive Survivability (thermal safety) (1 point)
2. Path 2: Standard Effective Temperature (SET)
3. Path 3: Passive House certification



# Thermal Resilience

---

A building's ability to remain at and/or to recover to a habitable state after a disruptive event (such as power outage) where mechanical equipment is not providing heating, cooling or ventilation.”  
(Siu et al., 2023)



A building's ability to remain at and/or to recover to a habitable state after a disruptive event (such as power outage) where mechanical equipment is not providing heating, cooling or ventilation, although some critical loads may be met with local renewable generation and battery backup.



How do we Measure Thermal Resilience?



# The Goal: Protect Occupants

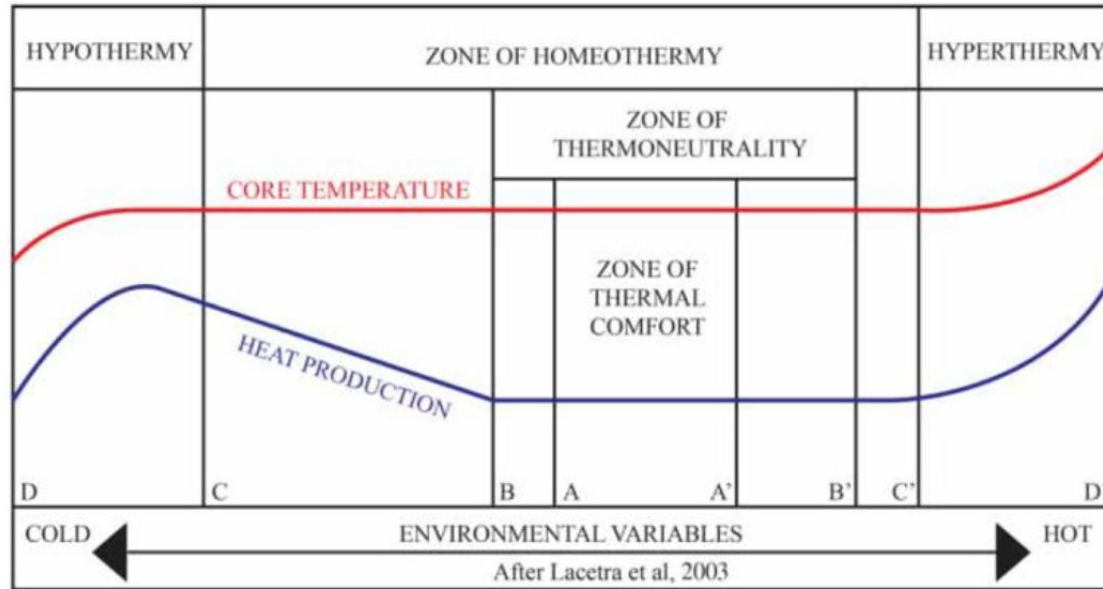


Figure 2a. Range of homeothermy (Holmes et al, 2016).



# Winter Metrics

---

## SET Hours [°F hr]

- Based on the Pierce Two Node comfort model
- Comprehensive of environmental conditions
  - Clo
  - Temperature (operative and DB)
  - Humidity
  - Wind speed
- Good for summer and winter

**Limit: 216 °F hr**

ASHRAE 55-2010 defines SET as “the temperature of an imaginary environment at 50% relative humidity, <0.1 m/s [0.33 ft/s] average air speed, and mean radiant temperature equal to average air temperature, in which total heat loss from the skin of an imaginary occupant with an activity level of 1.0 met and a clothing level of 0.6 clo is the same as that from a person in the actual environment, with actual clothing and activity level”



# Winter Metrics

## Hours below 2°C (35.6°F) [hr]

- Simple dry bulb calculation
- Limits freezing
  - Health risks
  - Infrastructure damage

**Limit: 0 hr**





# Summer Metrics

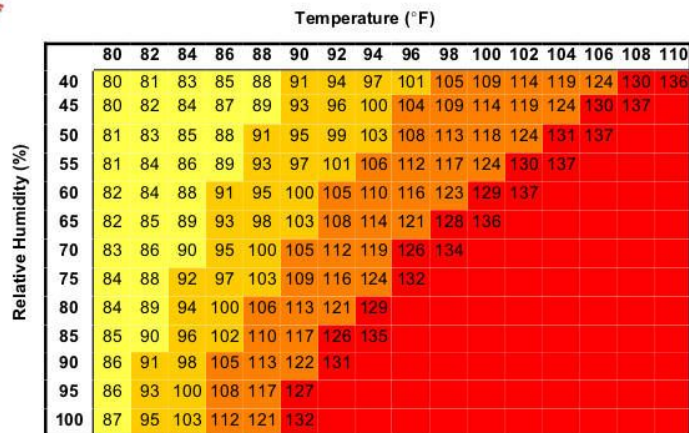
## Heat Index [°F]

- Commonly recognized
- Dry bulb + Humidity

**Limit: Advisory**



## National Weather Service Heat Index Chart



**Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure and/or Strenuous Activity**

■ Caution   ■ Extreme Caution   ■ Danger   ■ Extreme Danger

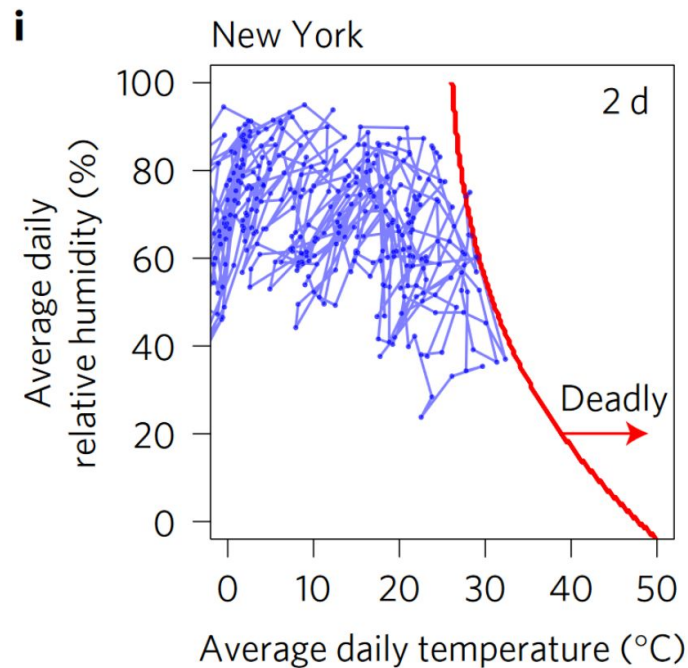


# Summer Metrics

## Mora Deadly Day [day]

- Based on epidemiological studies
- Dry bulb + Humidity

**Limit: 0 Days**





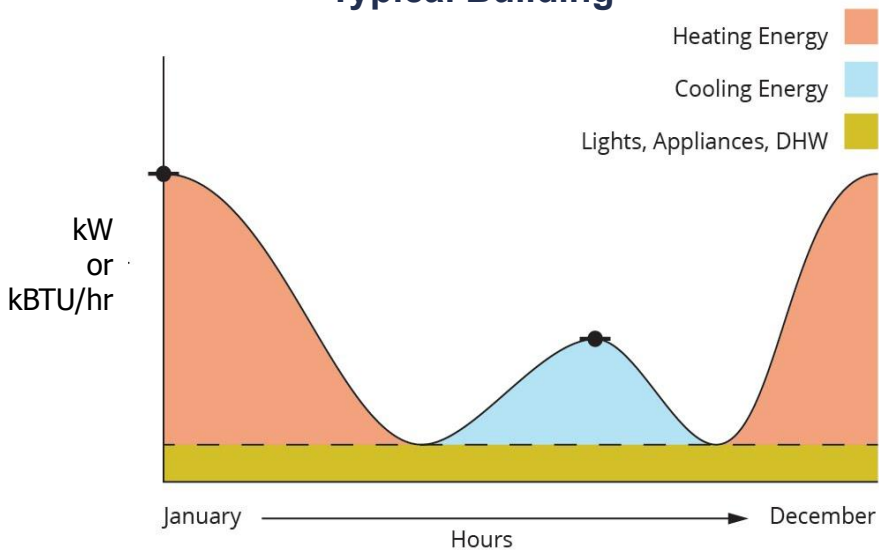


# Strategies

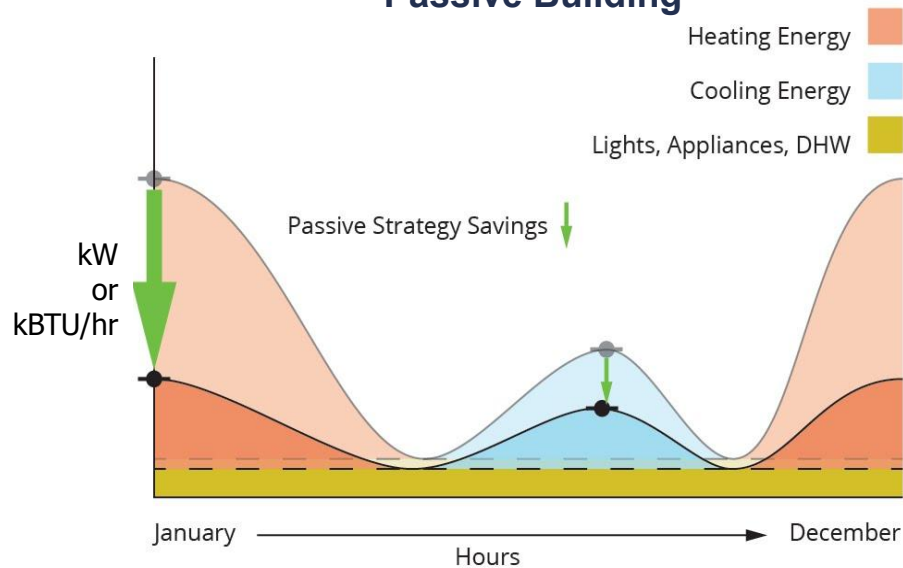


# Passive Building

## Typical Building



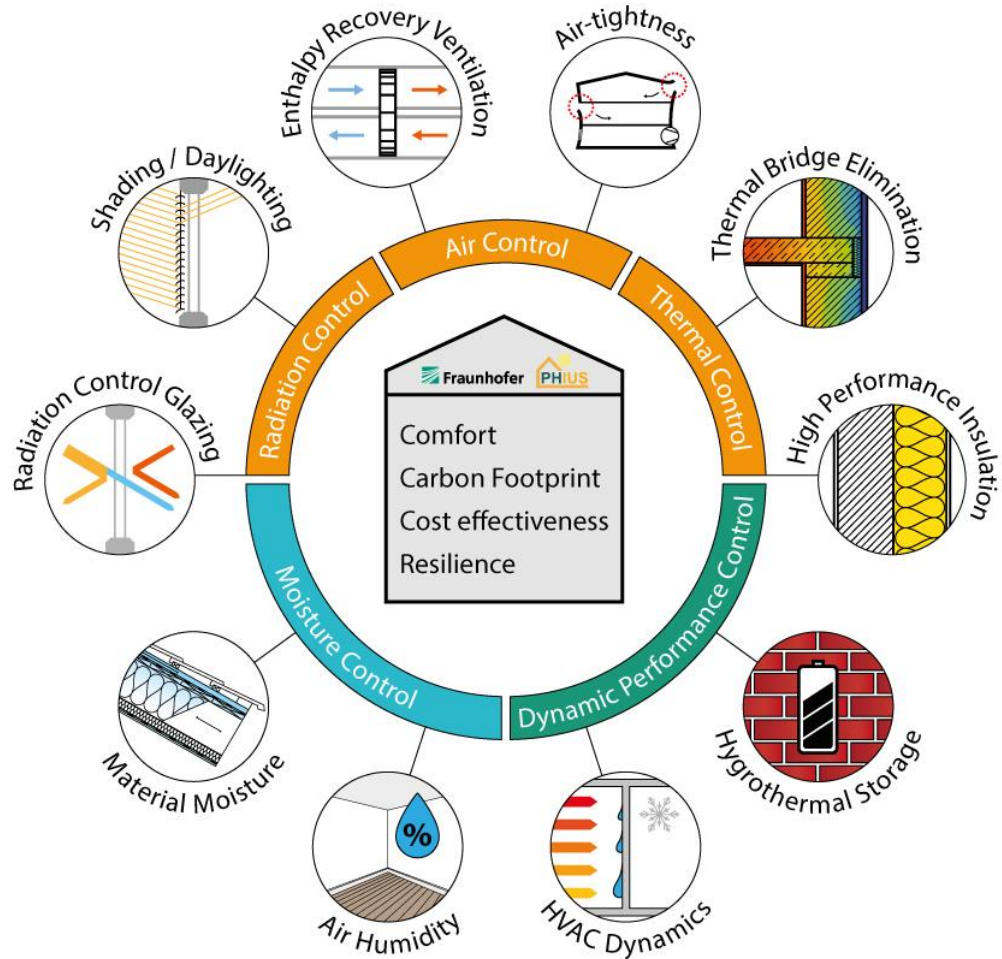
## Passive Building



**Annual Energy** = kWh/yr (or kBTU/yr) □ area under the curve

**Peak Power** = kW (or kBTU/hr) □ point at top of curve

# Passive Building Principles & Dynamics



# Passive Building Principles

## THERMAL CONTROL



High Performance Insulation



Thermal Bridge Elimination



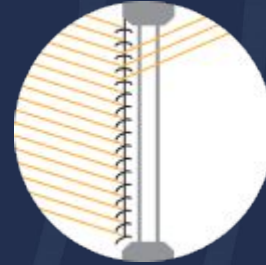
Air-Tightness

## AIR CONTROL



Enthalpy Recovery Ventilation

## RADIATION CONTROL



Shading / Daylighting



Climate Appropriate Glazing



# Measures such as:

**Resilience** | Air sealing, insulation, seismic, PV, batteries...

+

**Health** | Radon, Carbon monoxide, mold...

+

**Decarbonization** | Electrification, community solar, low-carbon choices...





# Summer Responses

## Passive Measures

- Natural Ventilation
- Scheduled Natural Ventilation
- Shades (preferably Exterior)





# Summer Responses

## When Passive Measures Aren't Enough

- Cooling on setback
- PV
- Batteries





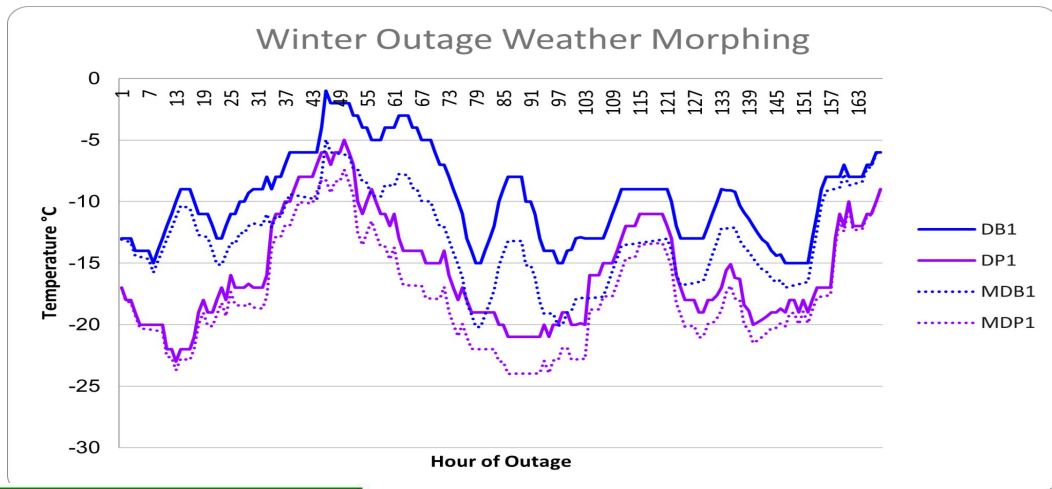
# Modeling





# Stress Weather

- Limited physics based stress weather data
- Morphing to match ASHRAE statistical returns
- 10-Year winter returns



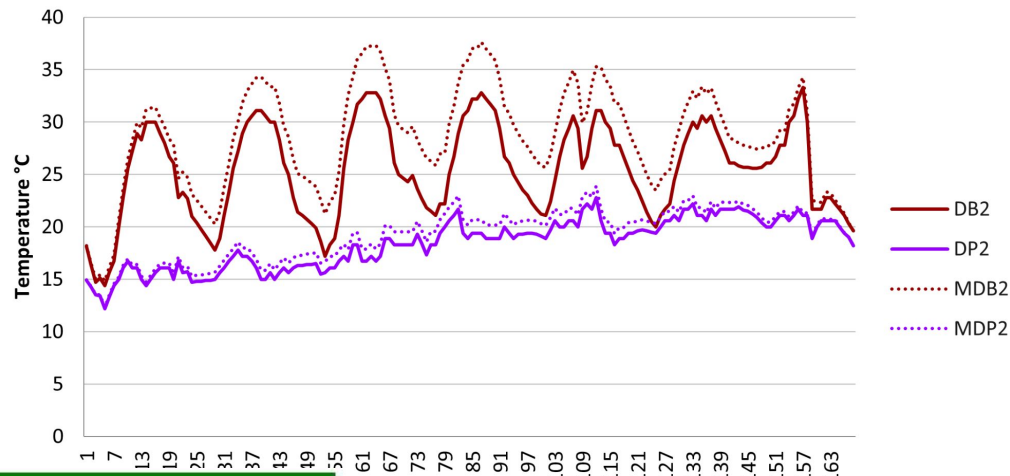
n-Year Return Period Values of Extreme Temperature

n=5 years		n=10 years		n=20 years		n=50 years	
Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
-1.4	97.8	-4.3	99.6	-7.1	101.2	-10.7	103.4
-3.0	79.5	-5.6	80.4	-8.2	81.2	-11.4	82.3



# Stress Weather

- Limited physics based stress weather data
- Morphing to match ASHRAE statistical returns
- 20 - Year summer returns



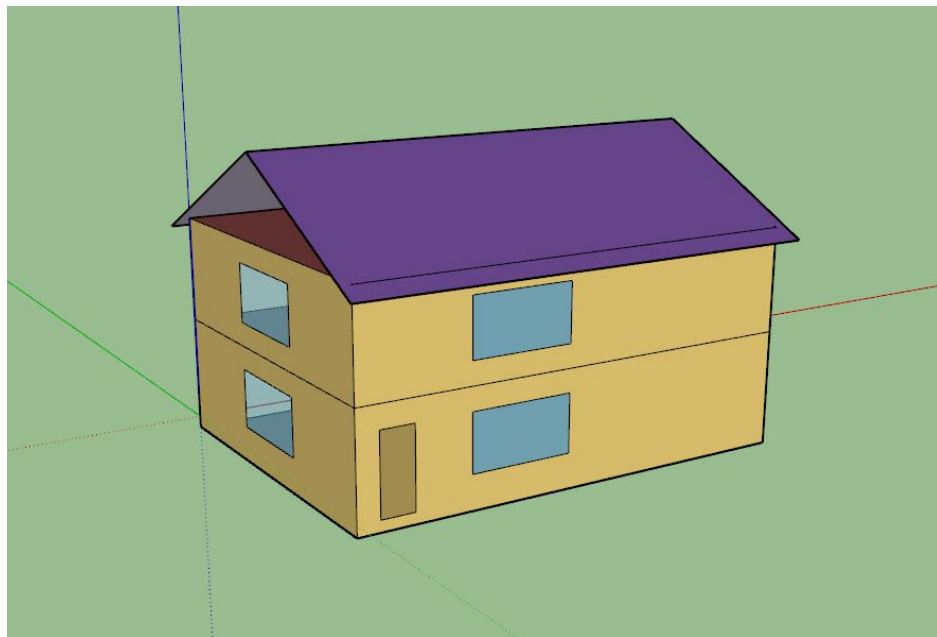
n-Year Return Period Values of Extreme Temperature							
n=5 years		n=10 years		n=20 years		n=50 years	
Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
-1.4	97.8	-4.3	99.6	-7.1	101.2	-10.7	103.4
-3.0	79.5	-5.6	80.4	-8.2	81.2	-11.4	82.3



# Test House

## US DOE Prototypical Single Family House:

- 2 Stories
- 3 beds (4 occ)
- 2,128 sqft (198 sqm)
- 13.5% WWR
- slab on grade





# Packages and Summer Modes

---

## Retrofit Packages:

0. Baseline House
1. Electrification
2. DOE 'Market Ready Envelope'
3. IECC 2021
- 3b. IECC 2021 @ 0.06cfm50
4. Phius CORE Prescriptive

## Summer Modes:

NV - natural vent., temp control

SchNV - scheduled nat. vent.,  
temp ctrl.

ShcNV+Shd - add exterior blinds

DC - heat pump

DC+Shd - heat pump + ext. blinds

# Inputs

User Input IDF  
(Geometry)

User Input CSV  
(Run List)

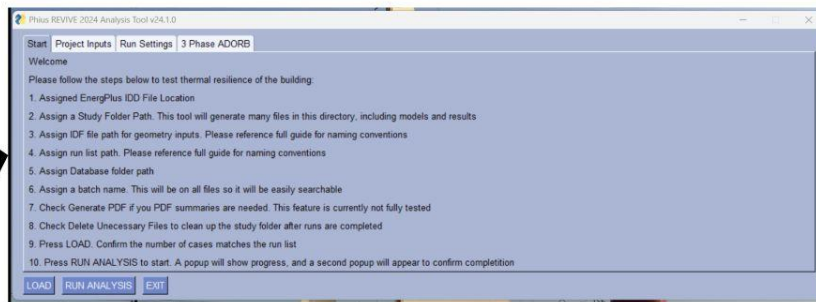
## Static Databases

Cambium Database  
Country Emissions Database

## User Editable Databases

Carbon Correction Database  
Construction Database  
Material Database  
Window Database

# Analysis



Resilience Simulation  
IDF

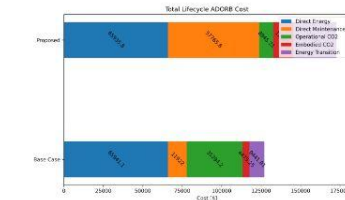
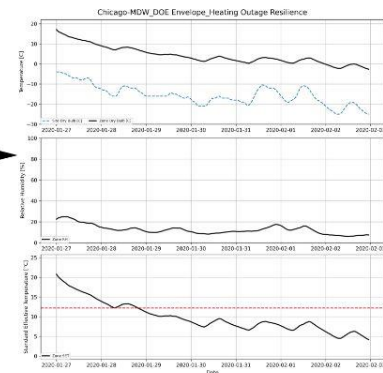


Annual Simulation  
IDF



ADORB

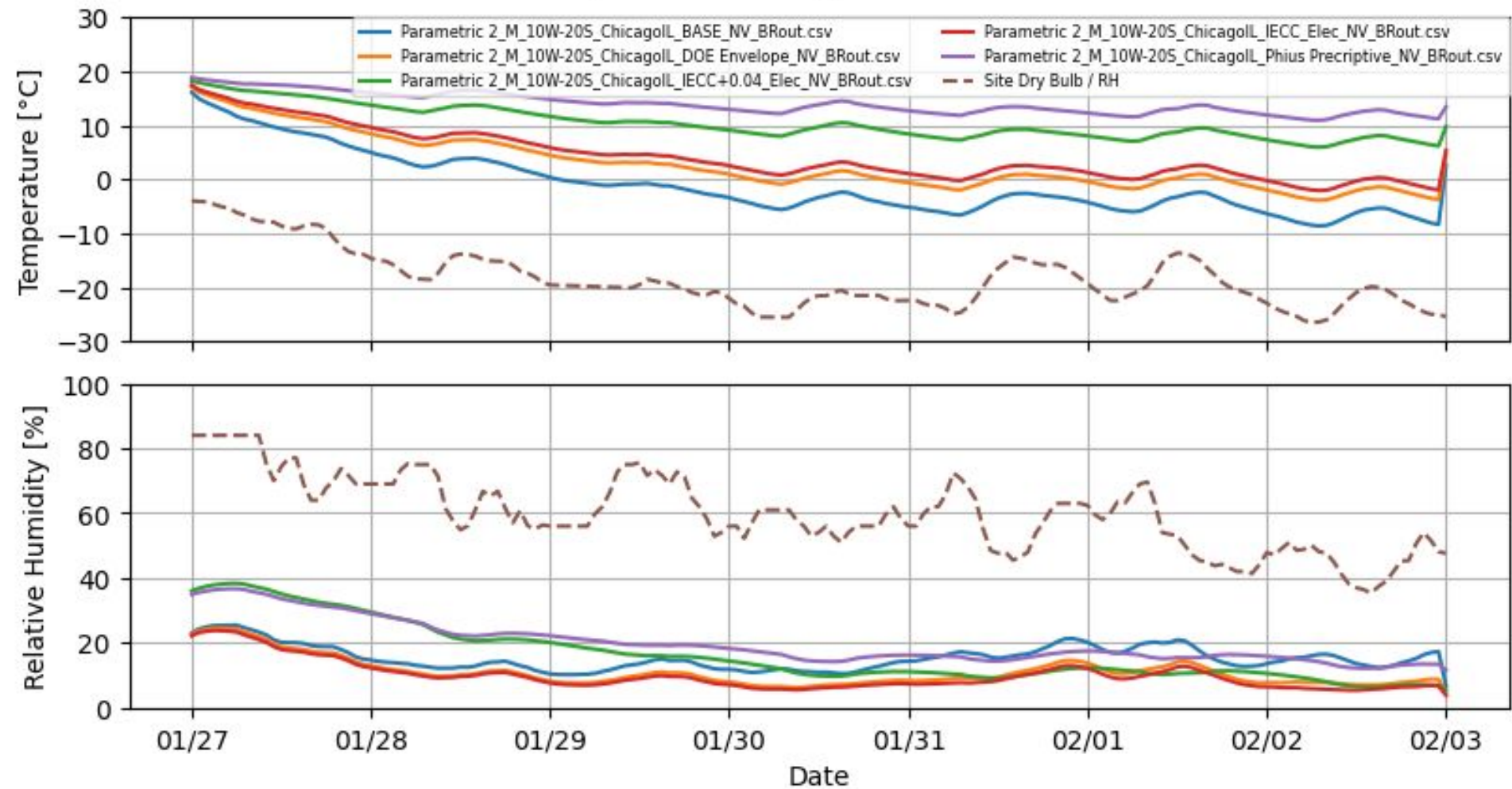
# Results



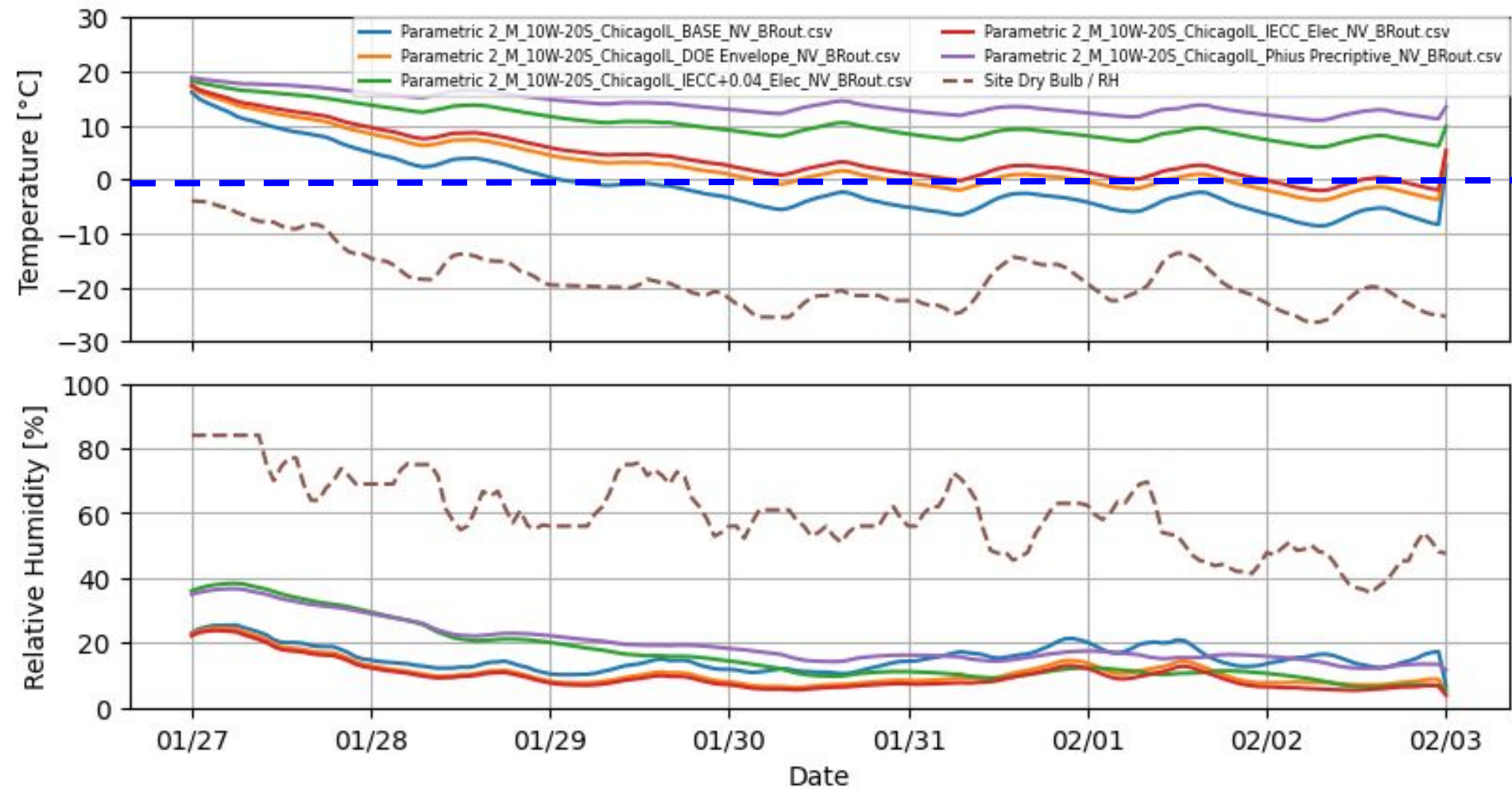


# Graphs

# Chicago Winter Outage Resilience

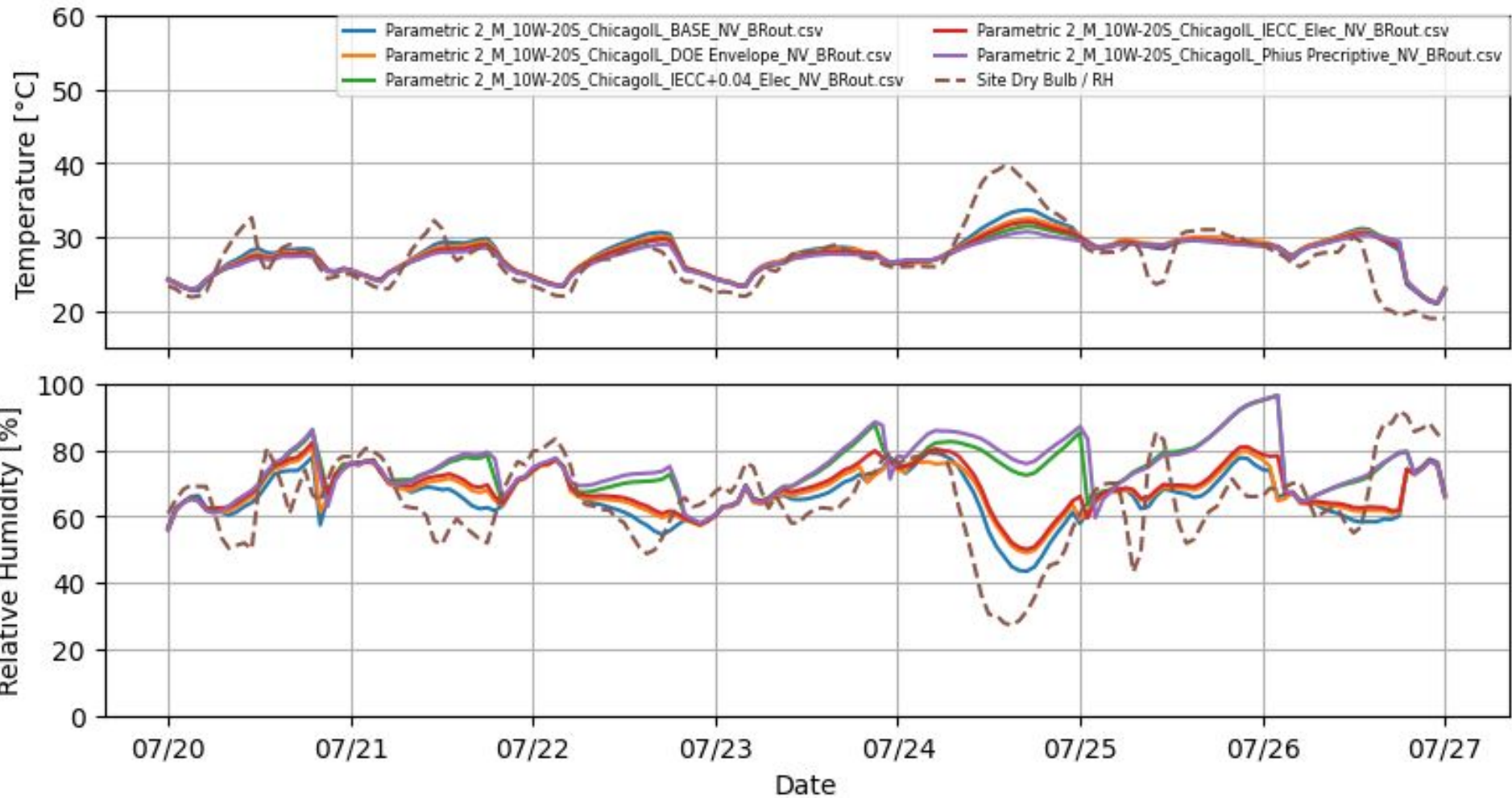


# Chicago Winter Outage Resilience

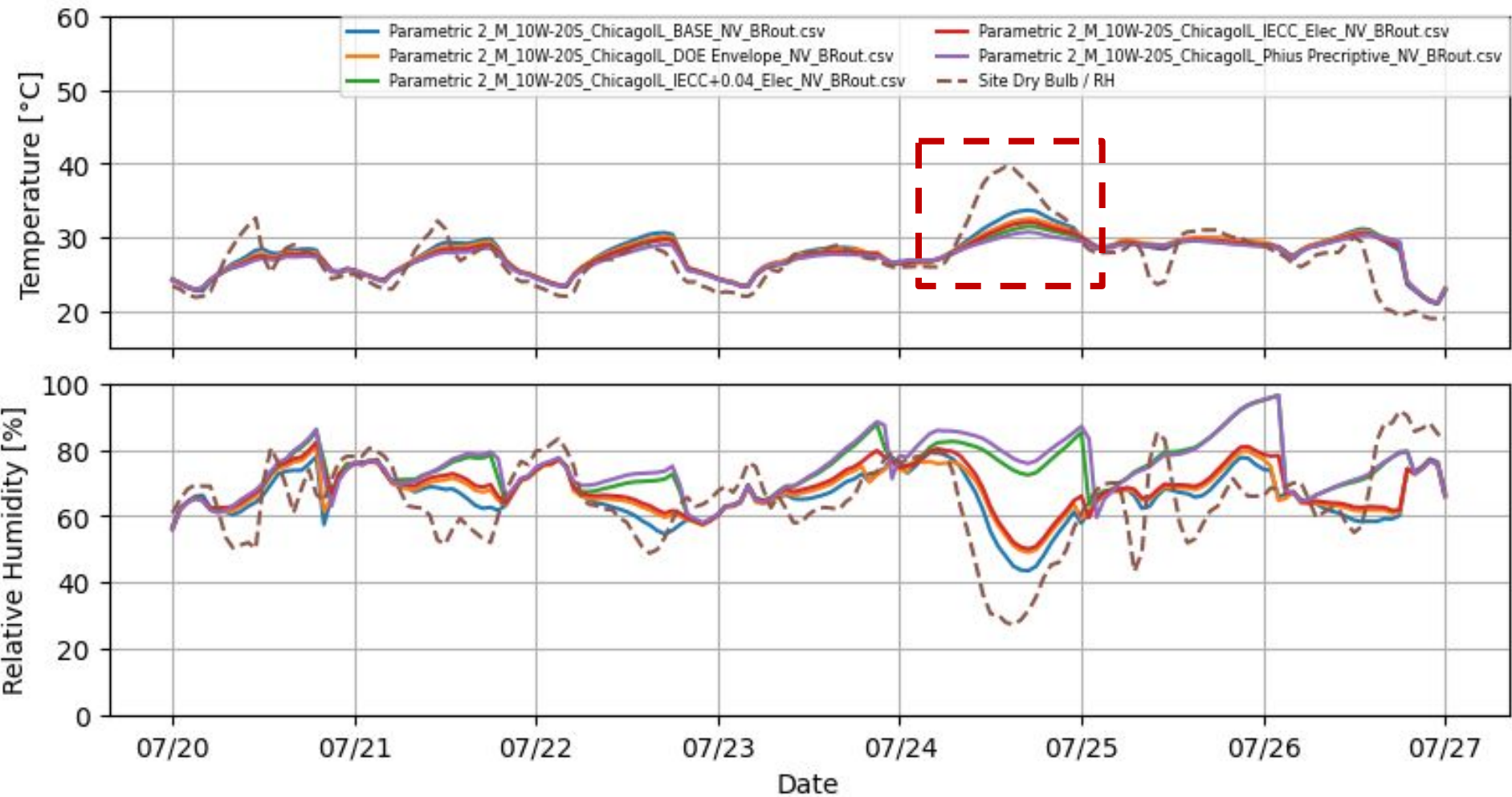




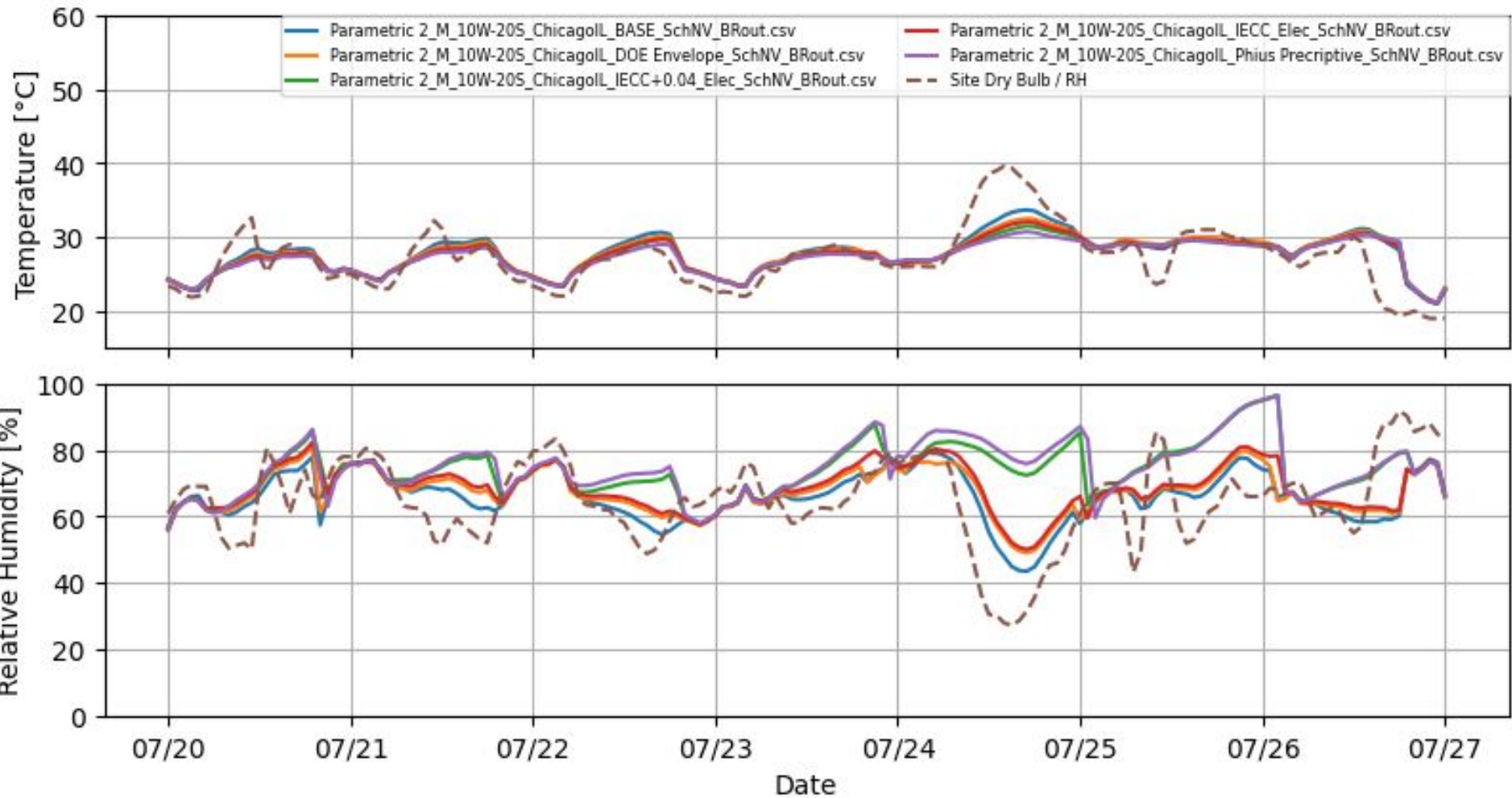
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



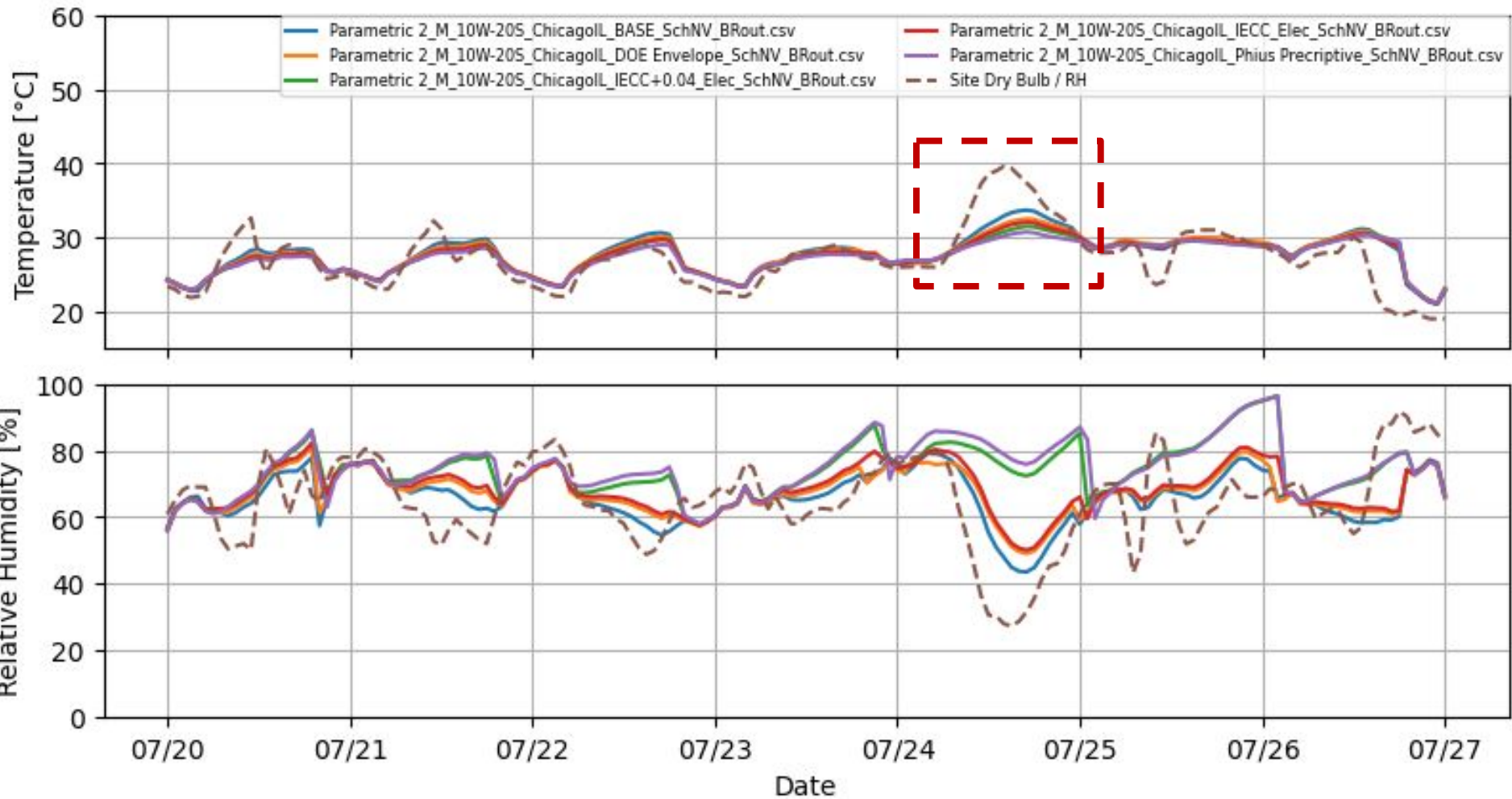
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



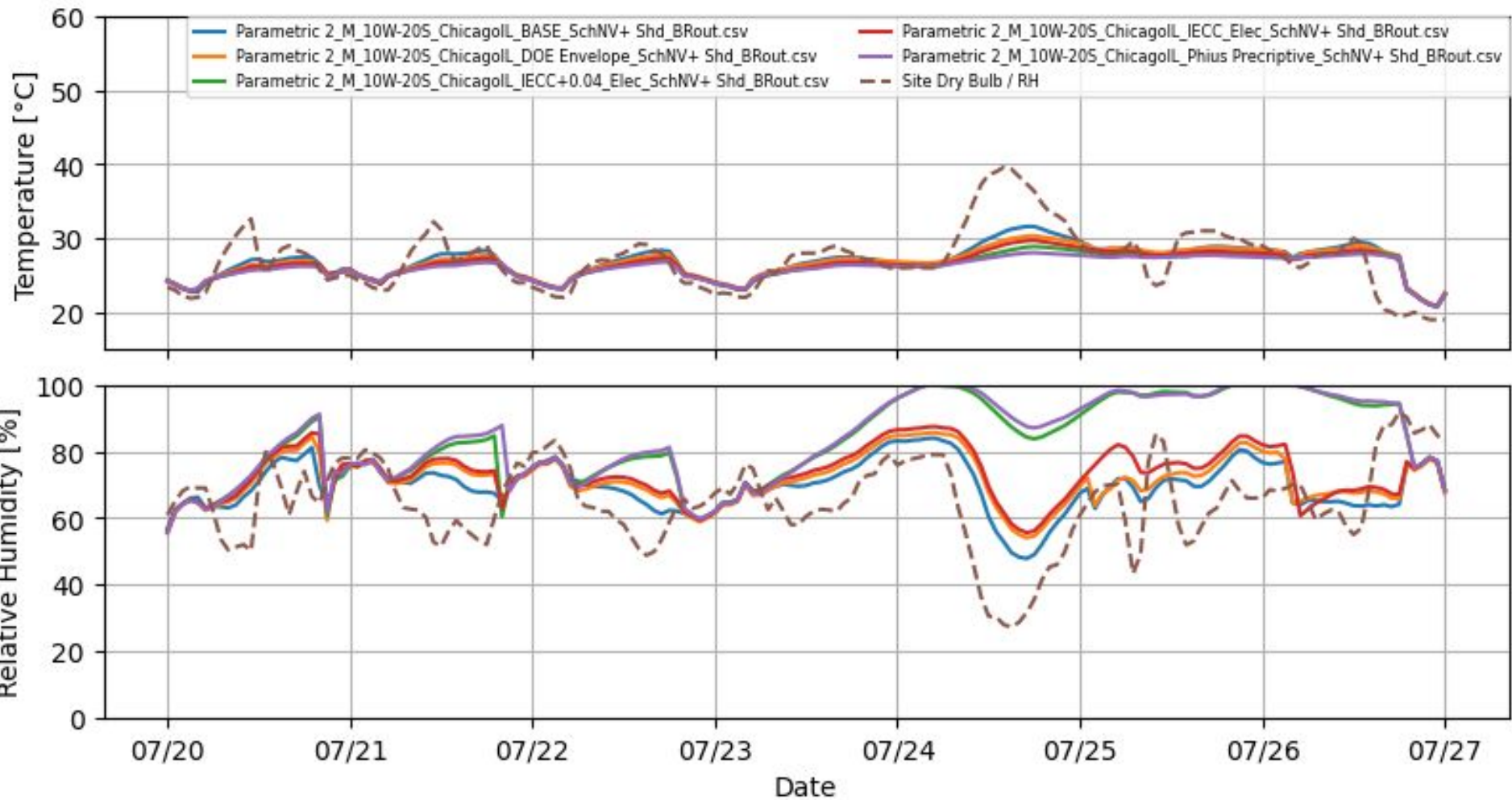
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



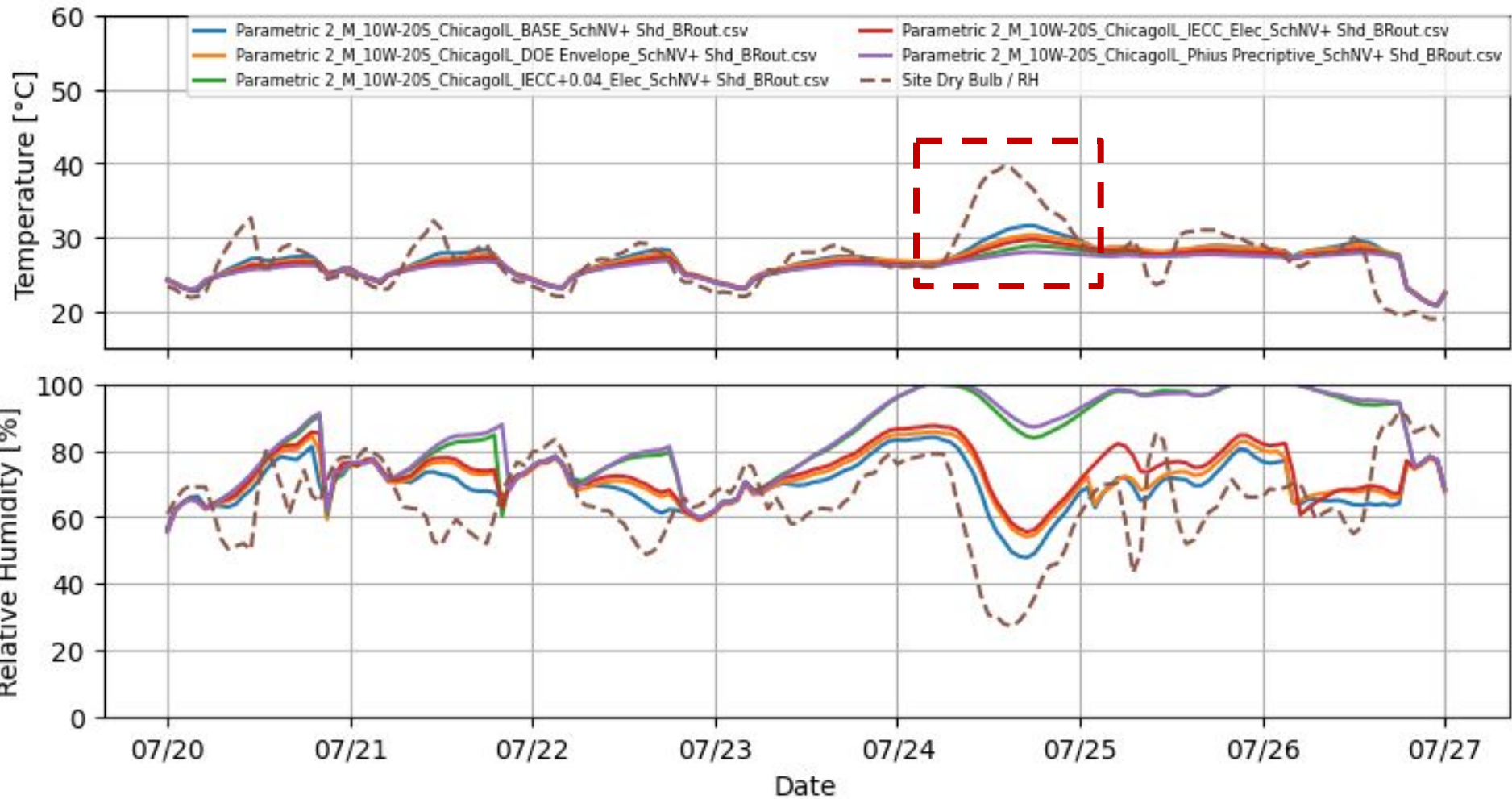
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



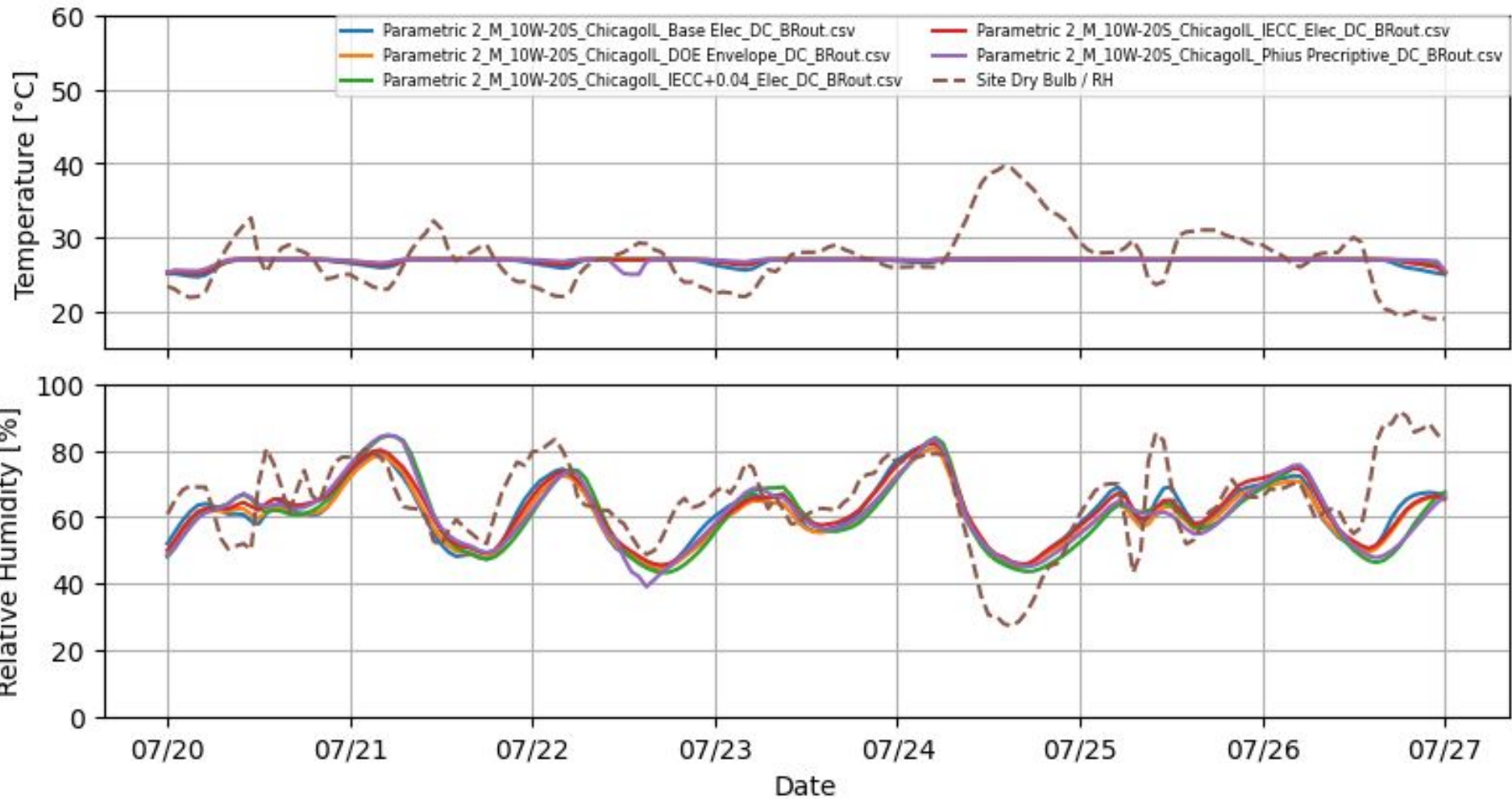
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



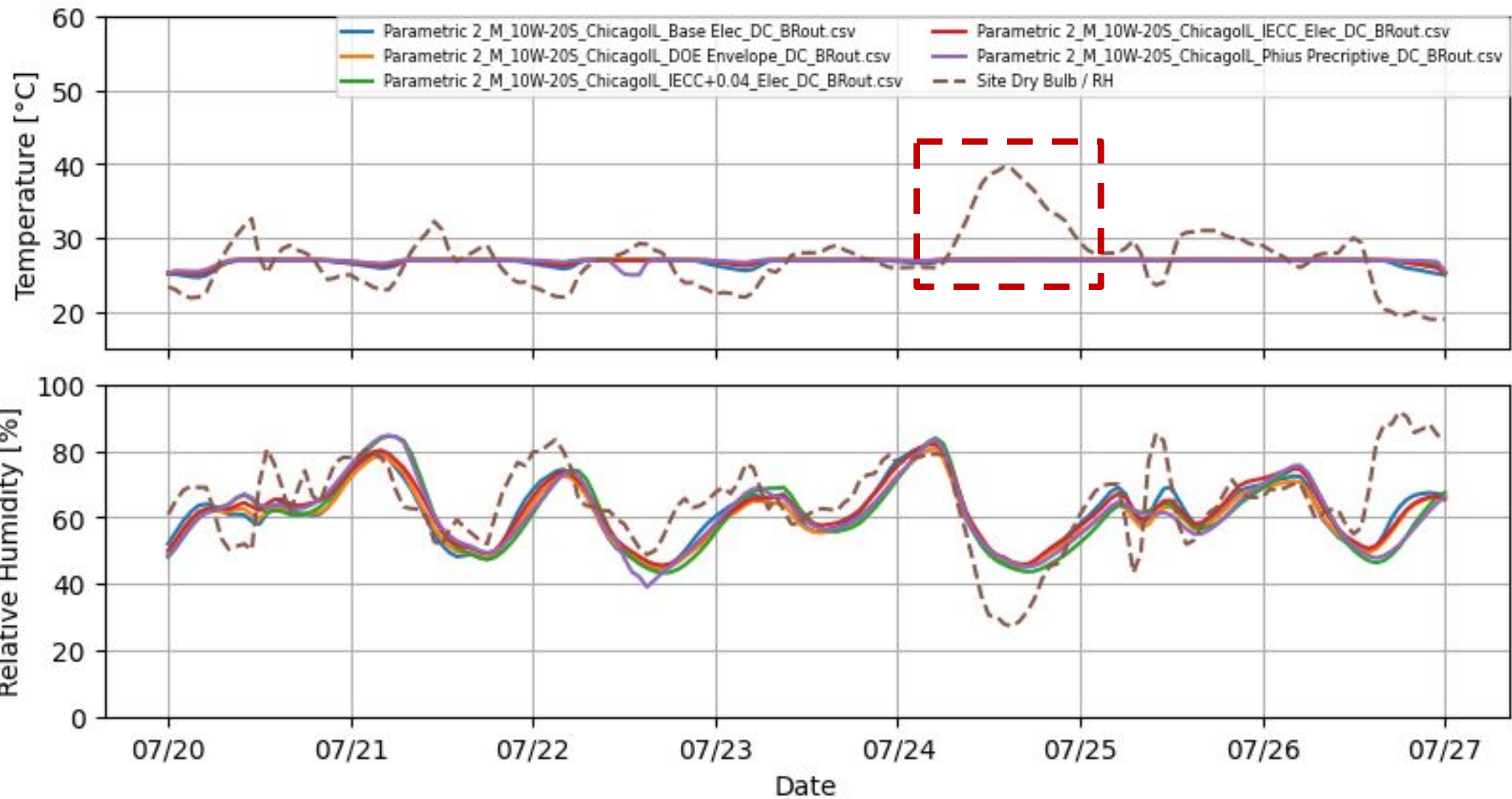
# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience

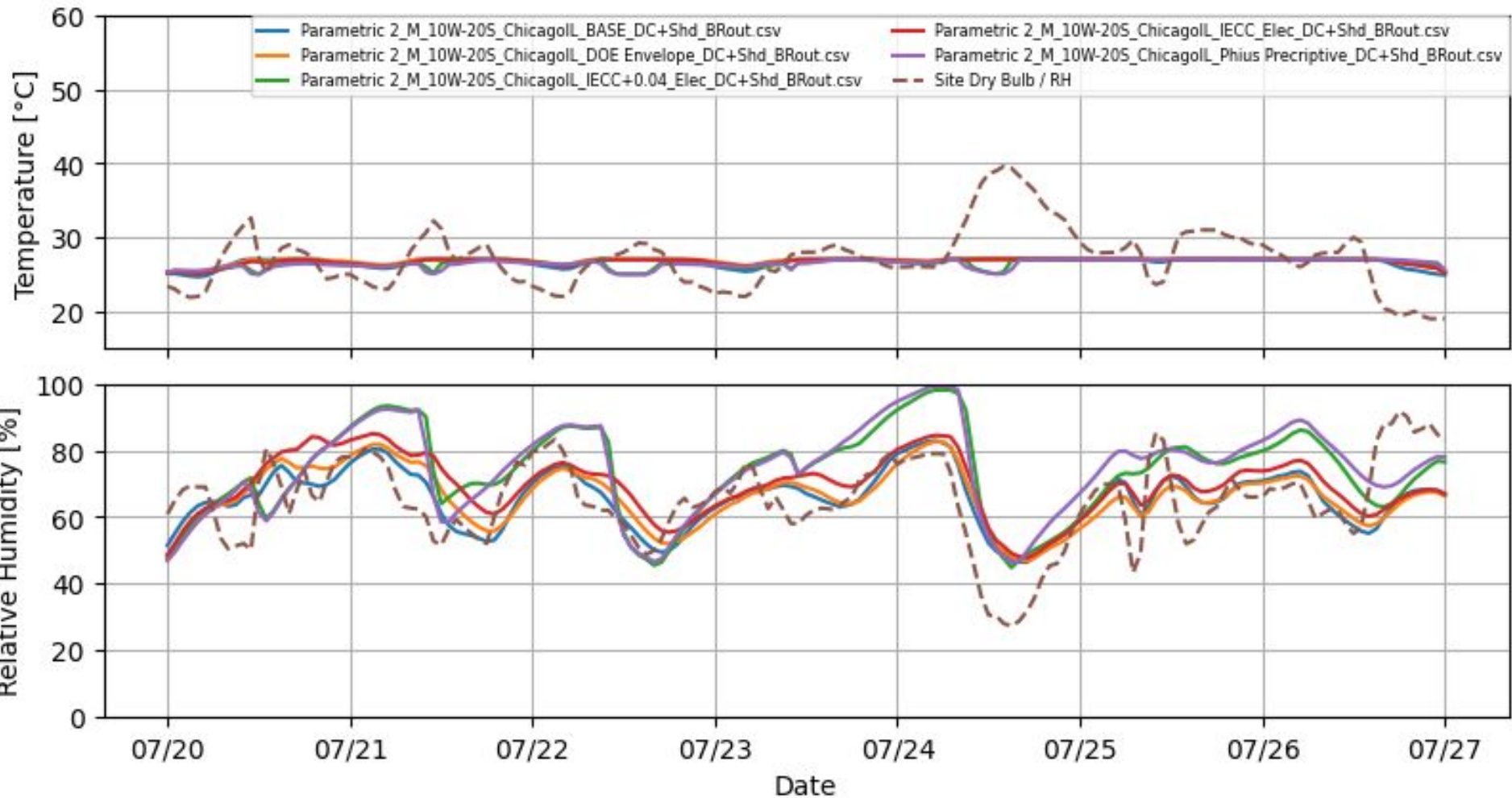


# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience





# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience



# Chicago Summer Outage Resilience

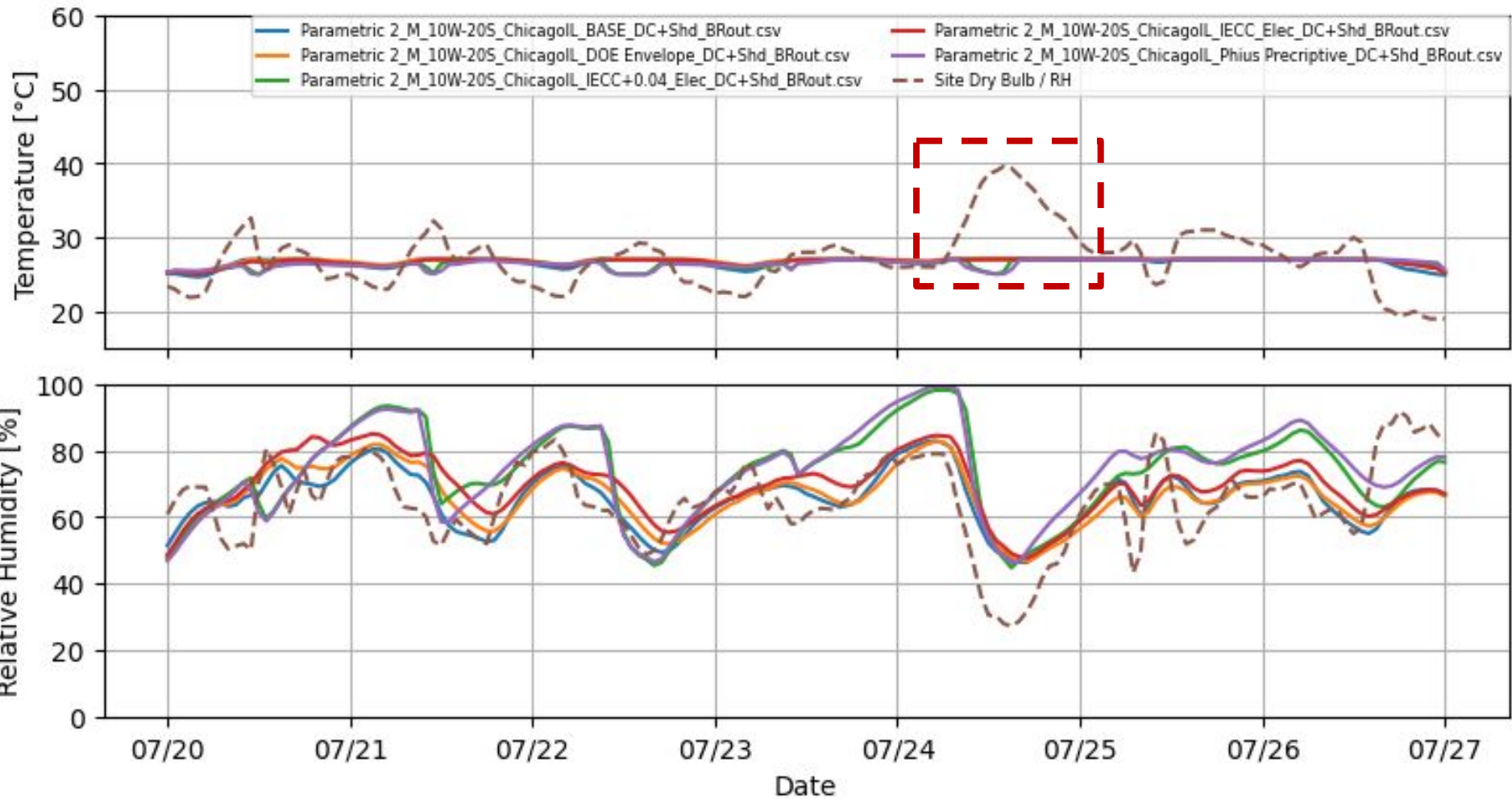


Table 3: This table details the single point metrics for the 8 climates run in the parametric study. Failing metrics highlighted in blue for winter outage and red for summer outage.

Run Name	SET Hours <12.2°C	Hours <2°C [hr]	Total Deadly Days	Caution (>26.7, <32.2°C) [hr]	Extreme Caution (>32.2, <39.4°C) [hr]	Danger (>39.4, <51.7°C) [hr]	Extreme Danger (>51.7°C) [hr]	EUI [kWh/m <sup>2</sup> yr]
Tampa, Florida								
BASE_NV	0.0	0.0	7.0	52.8	80.8	11.8	0.0	61.4
DOE Envelope_NV	0.0	0.0	5.0	61.0	83.0	0.0	0.0	46.4
IECC_NV	0.0	0.0	6.0	57.3	84.5	2.5	0.0	48.9
IECC+0.4_NV	0.0	0.0	6.0	55.8	64.0	24.8	0.0	46.3
Phius Prescriptive_NV	0.0	0.0	5.0	57.5	83.0	3.3	0.0	43.3
Chicago, Illinois								
BASE_NV	998.0	118.1	2.0	66.5	57.0	0.0	0.0	162.7
DOE Envelope_NV	540.3	48.6	2.0	67.0	56.5	0.0	0.0	88.6
IECC_NV	370.8	21.0	2.0	71.8	50.3	0.0	0.0	80.5
IECC+0.4_NV	2.7	0.0	3.0	54.0	59.8	7.0	0.0	54.6
Phius Prescriptive_NV	0.0	0.0	3.0	59.3	61.0	0.0	0.0	44.5
International Falls, Minnesota								
BASE_NV	1619.0	159.3	0.0	39.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	291.5
DOE Envelope_NV	1041.3	122.8	0.0	36.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	157.7
IECC_NV	777.5	103.3	0.0	33.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	141.7
IECC+0.4_NV	60.0	0.0	0.0	34.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	81.2
Phius Prescriptive_NV	0.0	0.0	0.0	34.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	54.6



# Conclusions



# Why This Metric

---

- Good measure of how passive a building is
- Less investment (capital and embodied CO<sub>2</sub>) than new construction passive buildings
- Buildings in values to the owner
  - Occupant health and safety
  - Load reduction
  - Operational energy savings
- Tunable to each specific building



# Key Takeaways

---

- Thermal resilience is measurable and achievable
- Existing modeling tools can be used to simulate the outage period
- Passive measures work well for winter thermal resilience
- Summer responses:
  - Passive strategies can work well in dry summers
  - Humid summers need some dehumidification



# Future Work

---

- Run more studies to validate strategies
- Optimize mixed mode strategies for summer outages
- Real life study to validate modeling
- Work on multizonal model
- Future weather data
- Extreme weather data
- Non-residential buildings?





# Questions?

---

**Al Mitchell, EIT, CPHC**  
Technical Staff, Phius  
[amitchell@phius.org](mailto:amitchell@phius.org)



# Appendix

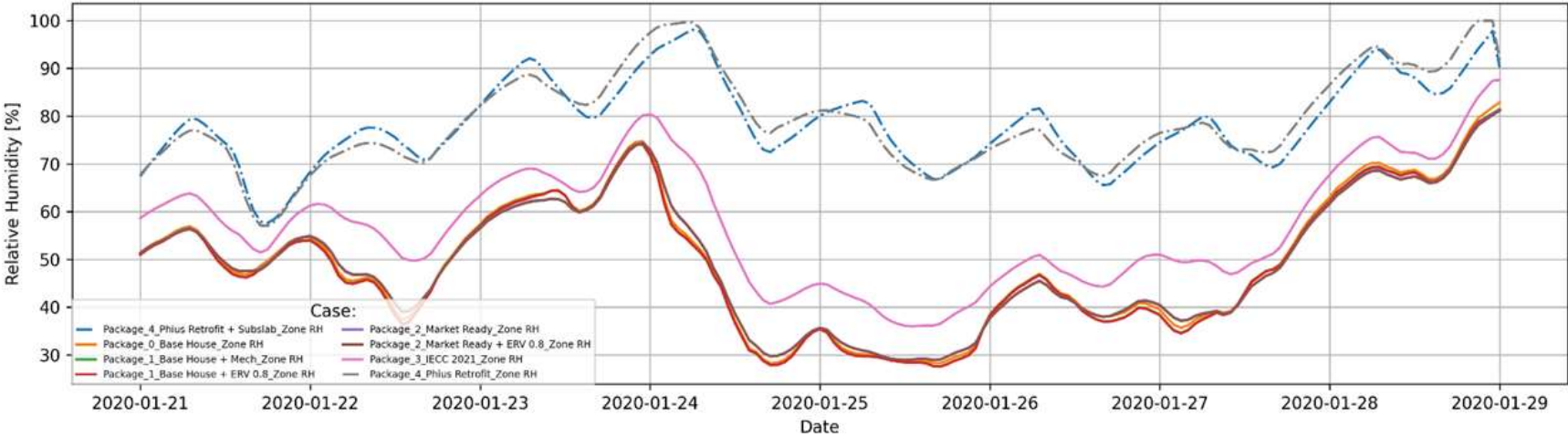
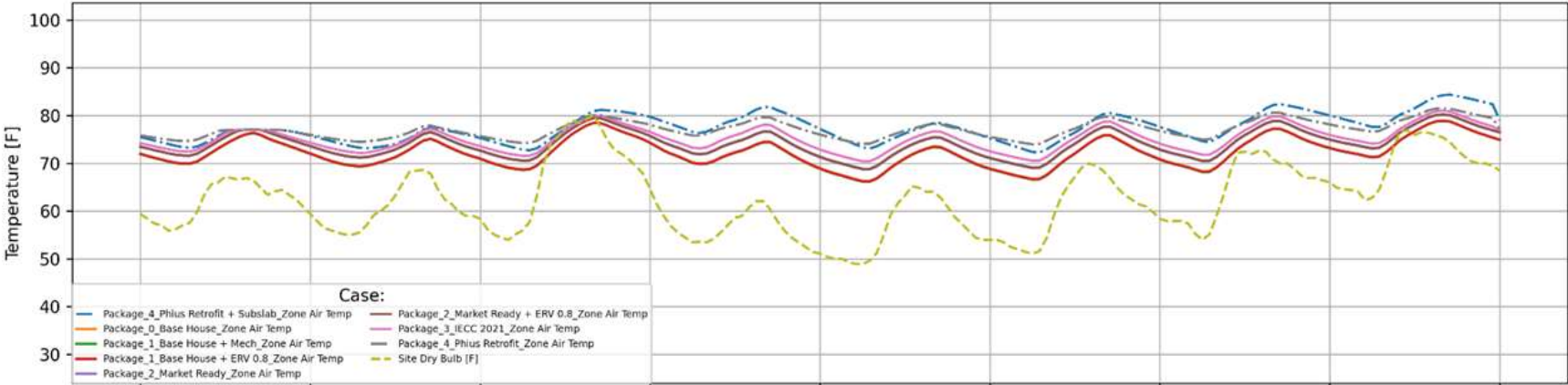
Full graph results for:

- Miami, FL
- El Paso, TX
- Seattle, WA
- Denver, CO
- International Falls, MN

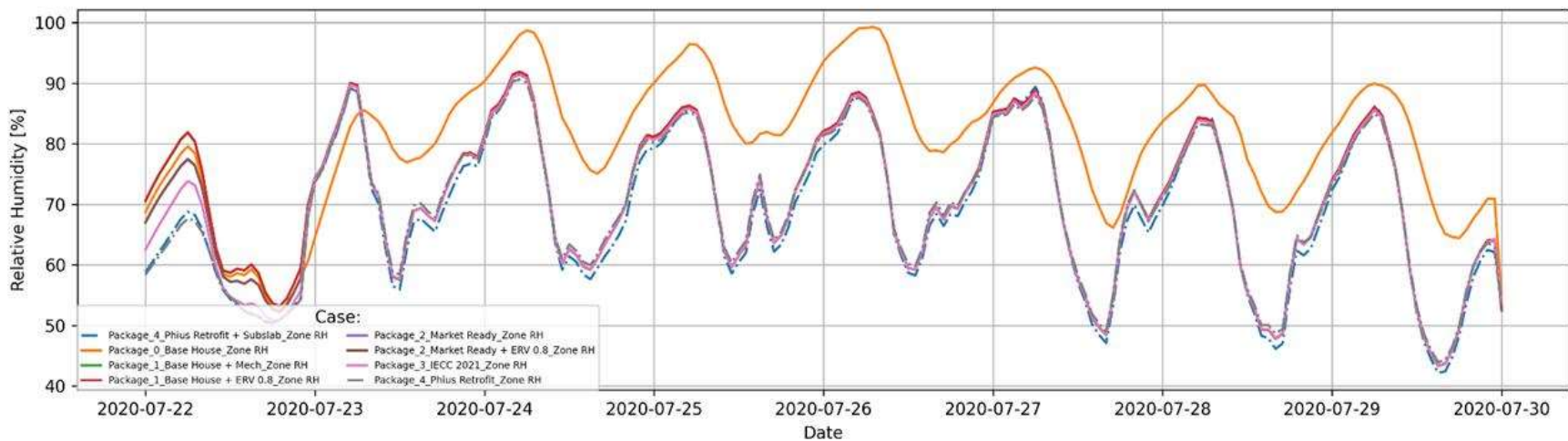
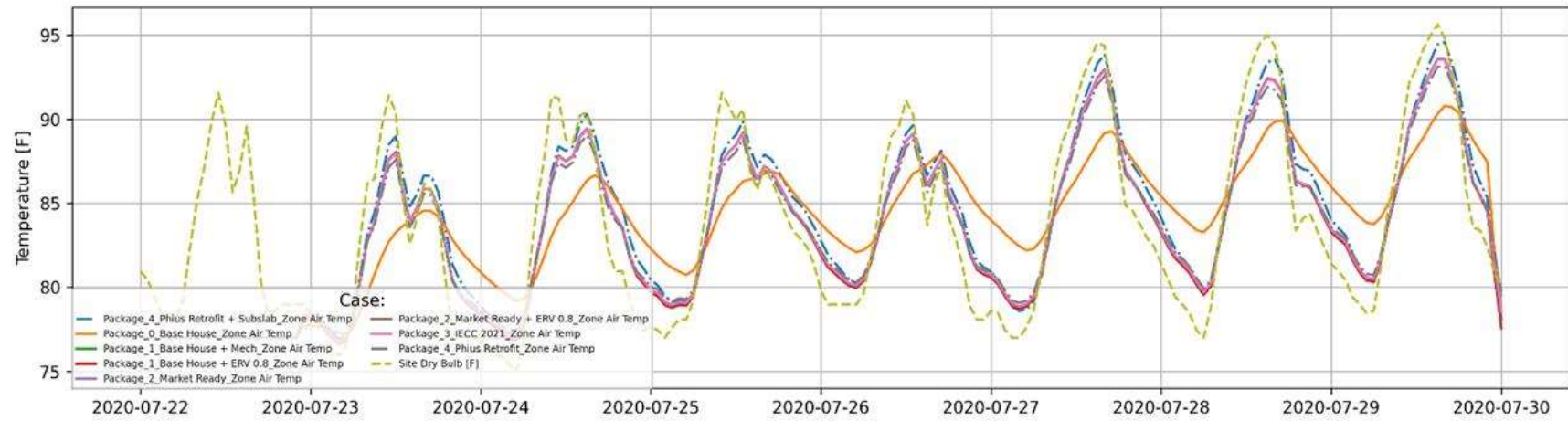
Miami, FL



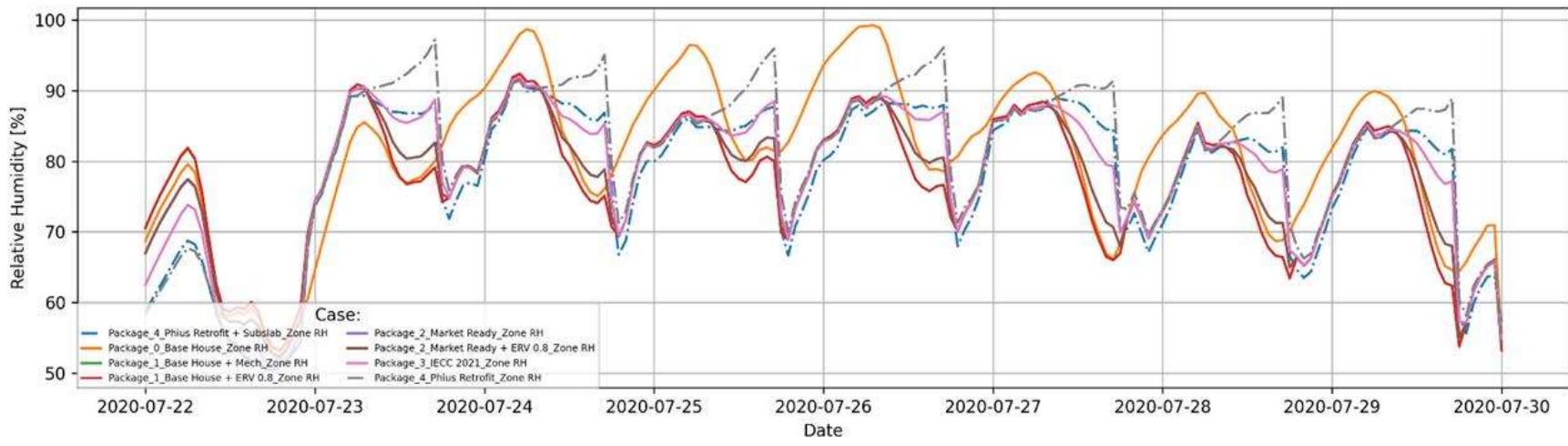
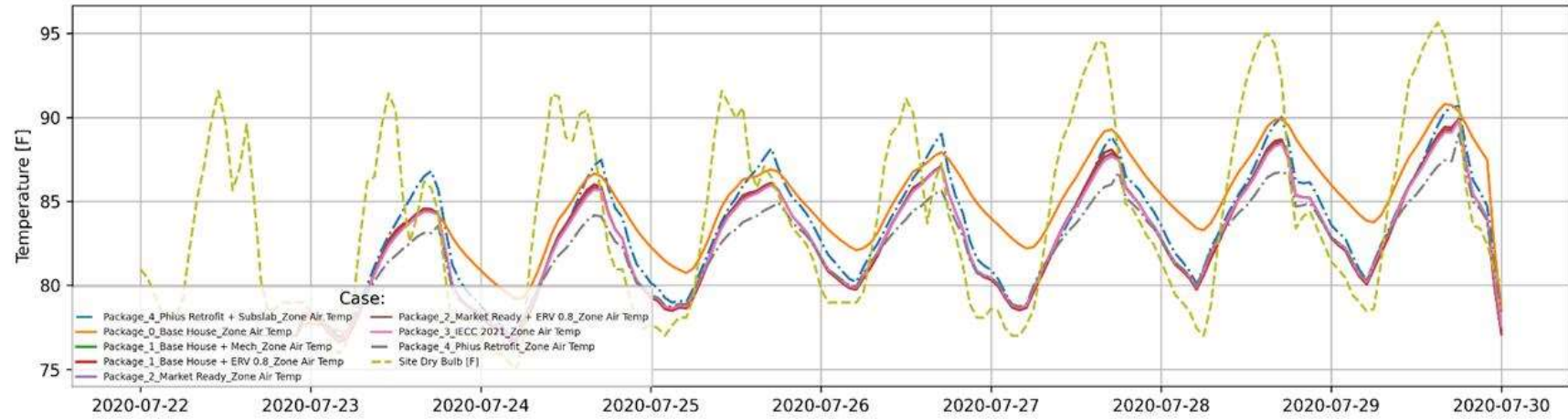
### MIAMI\_NV\_Heating Outage Resilience



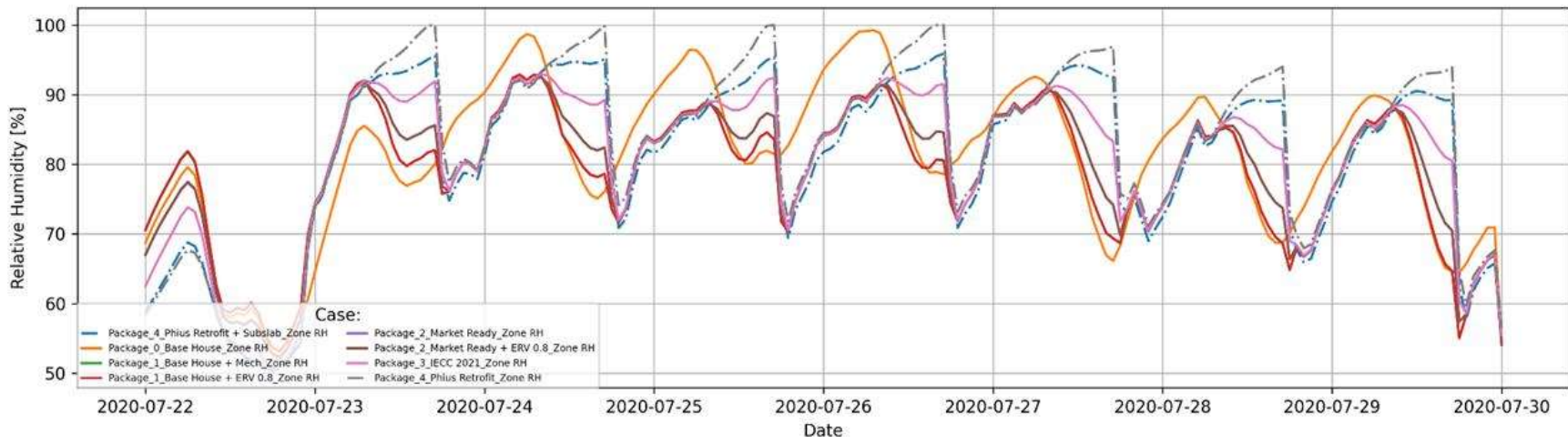
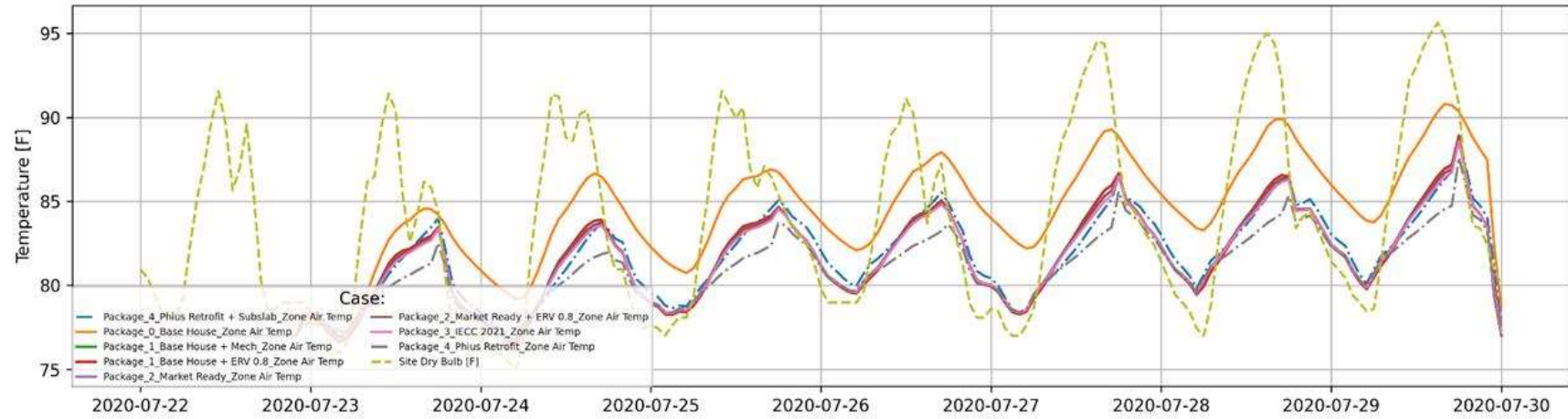
# MIAMI\_NV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



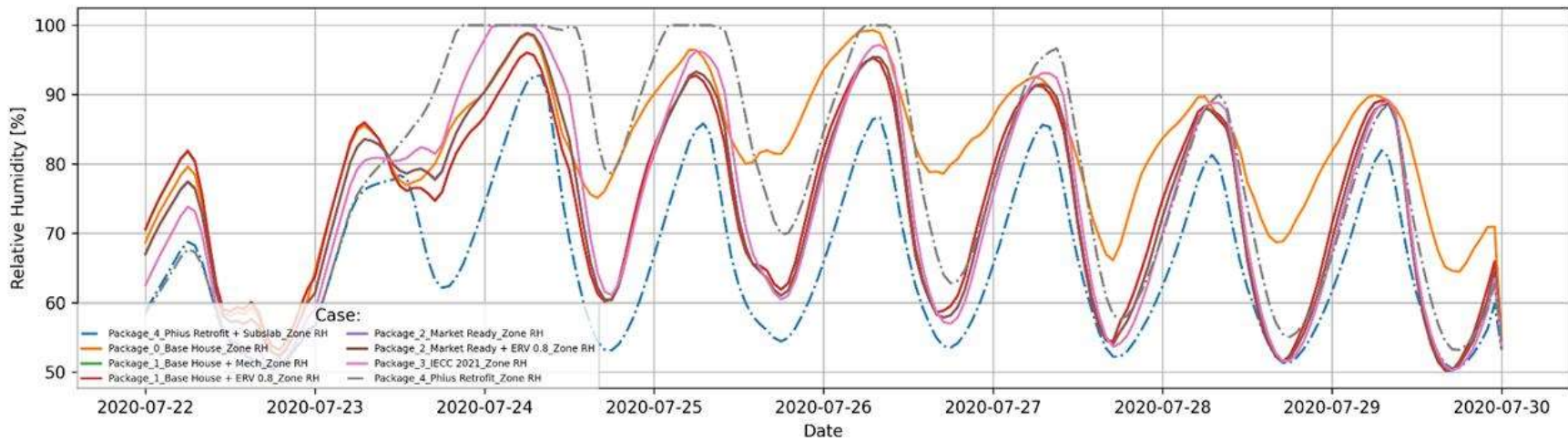
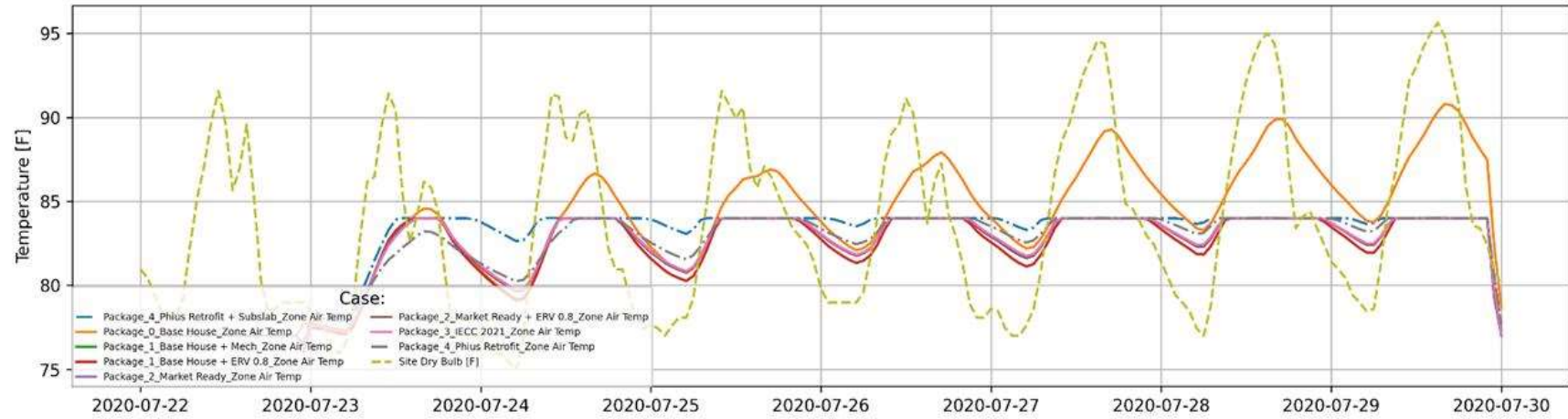
### MIAMI\_SNV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



# MIAMI\_SNV+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience

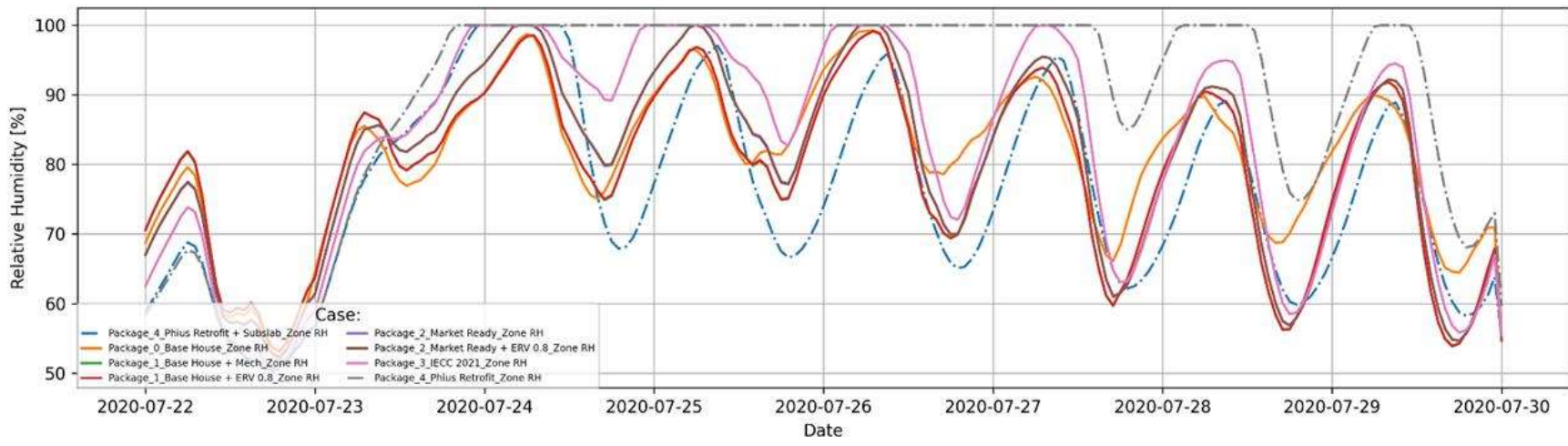
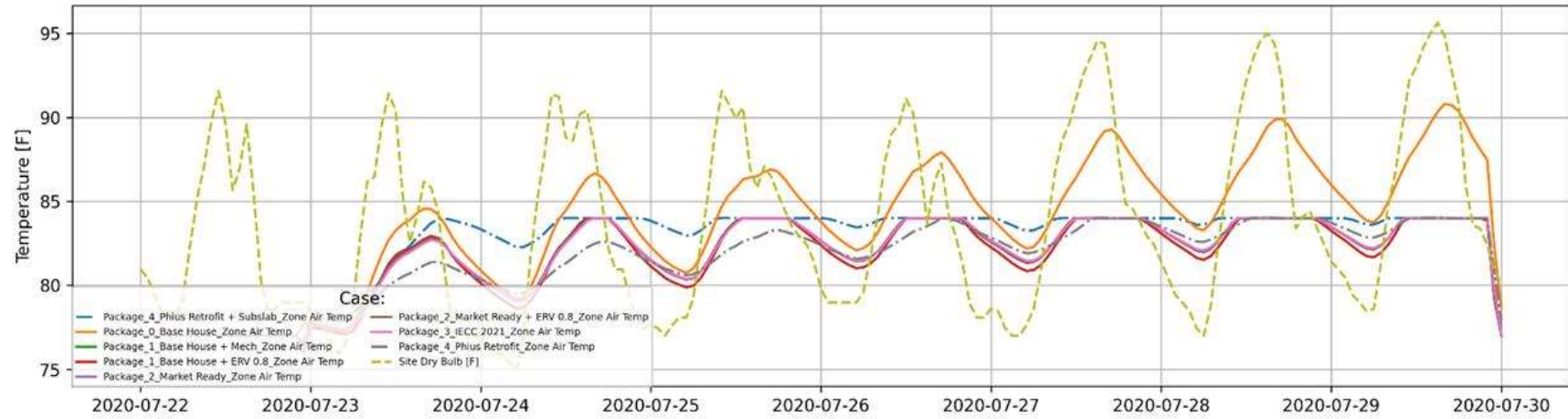


# MIAMI\_HP\_Cooling Outage Resilience





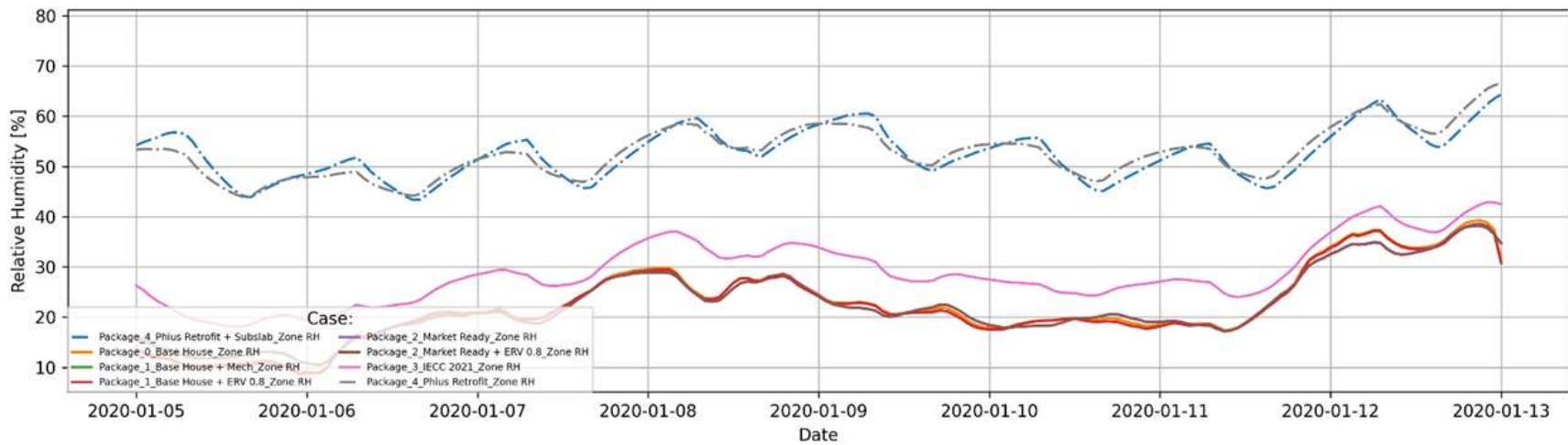
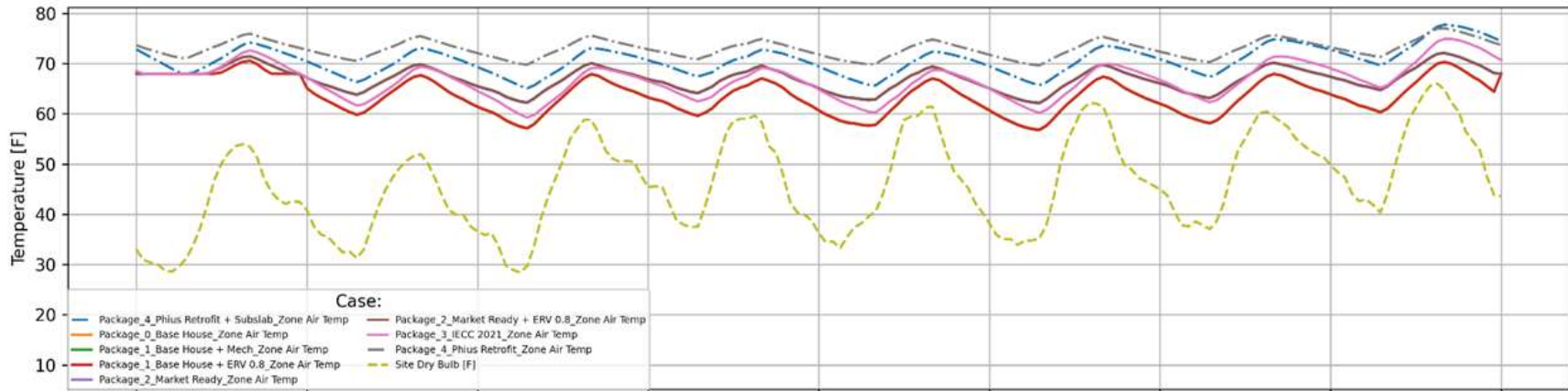
### MIAMI\_HP+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



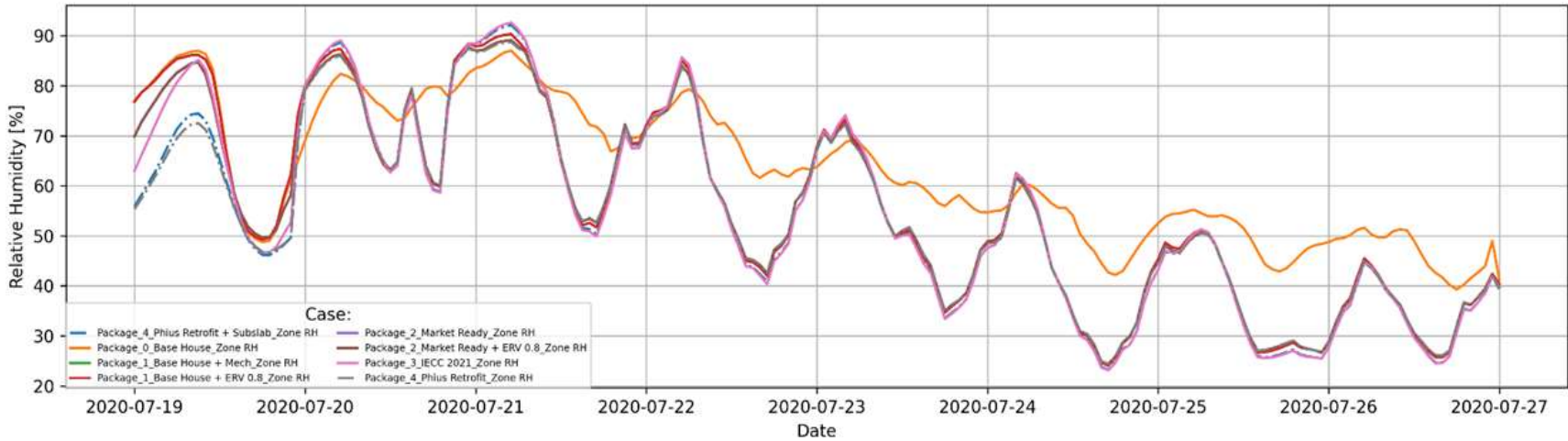
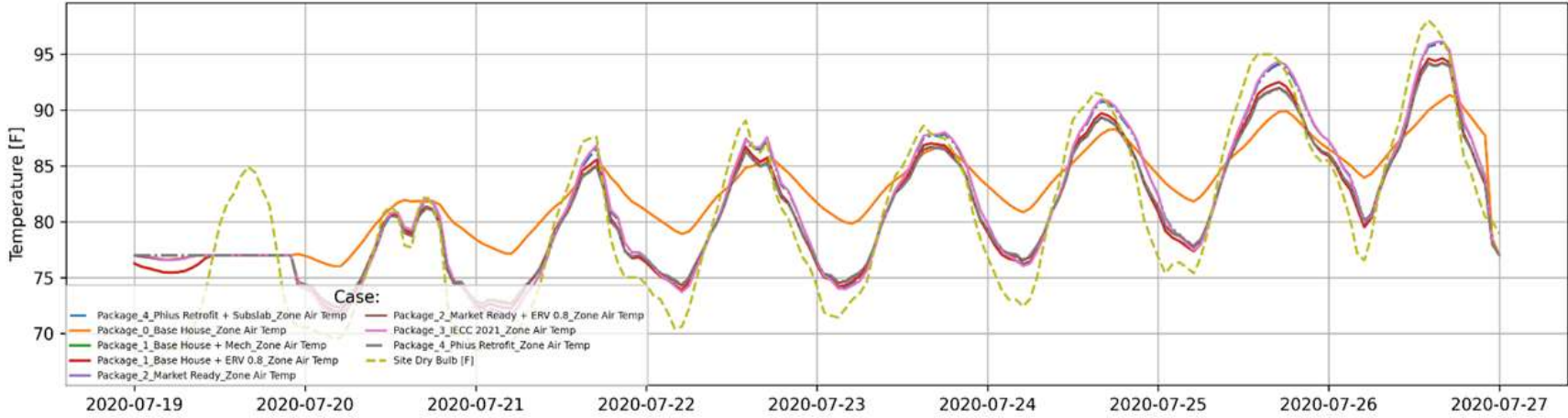
El Paso, TX



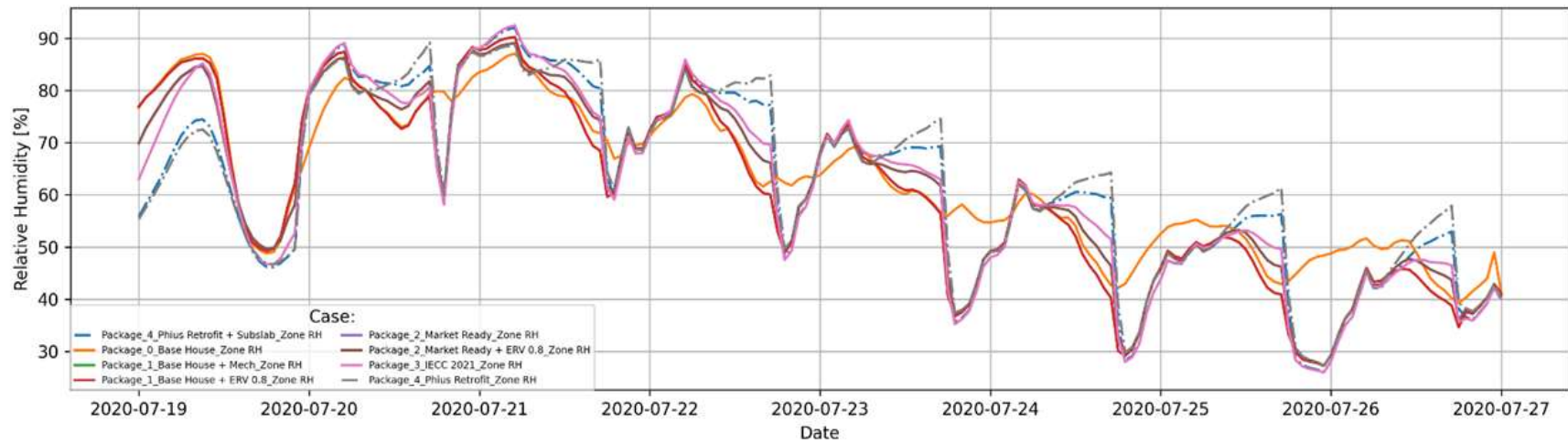
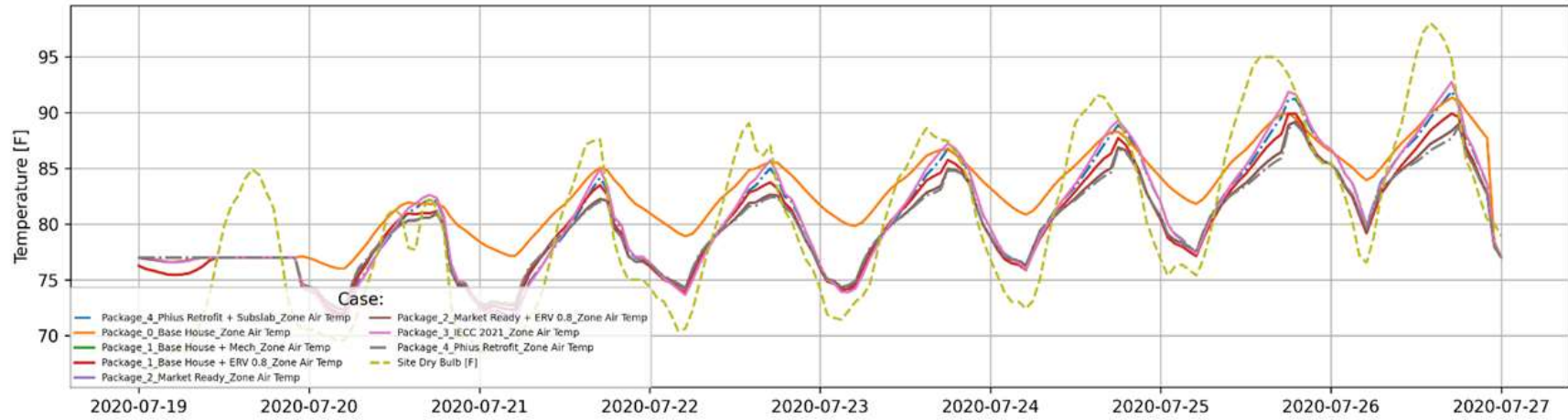
# EL-PASO\_NV\_Heating Outage Resilience



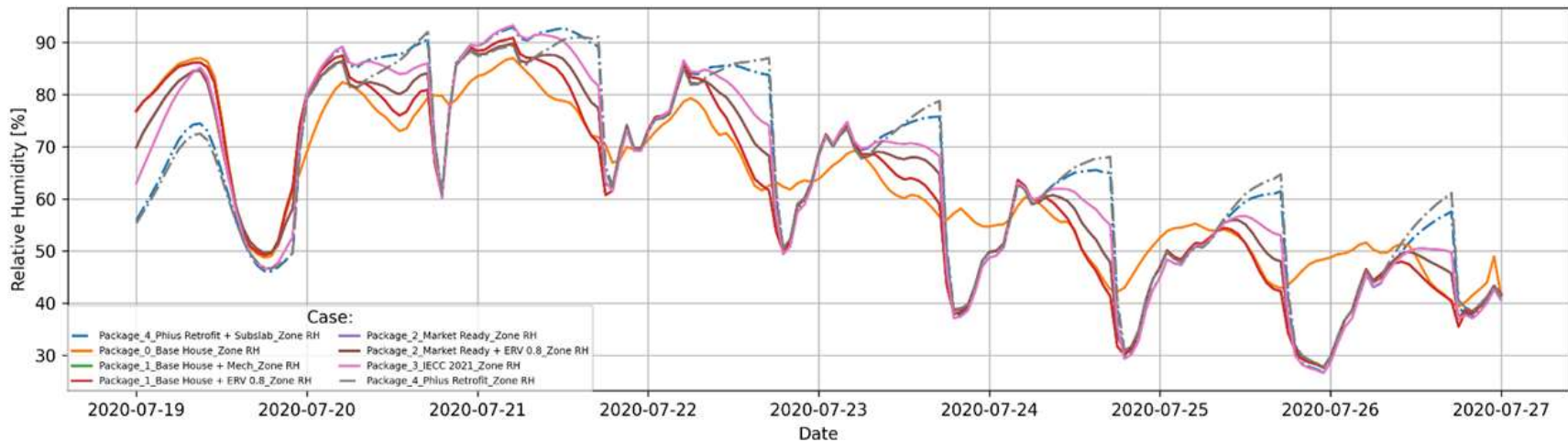
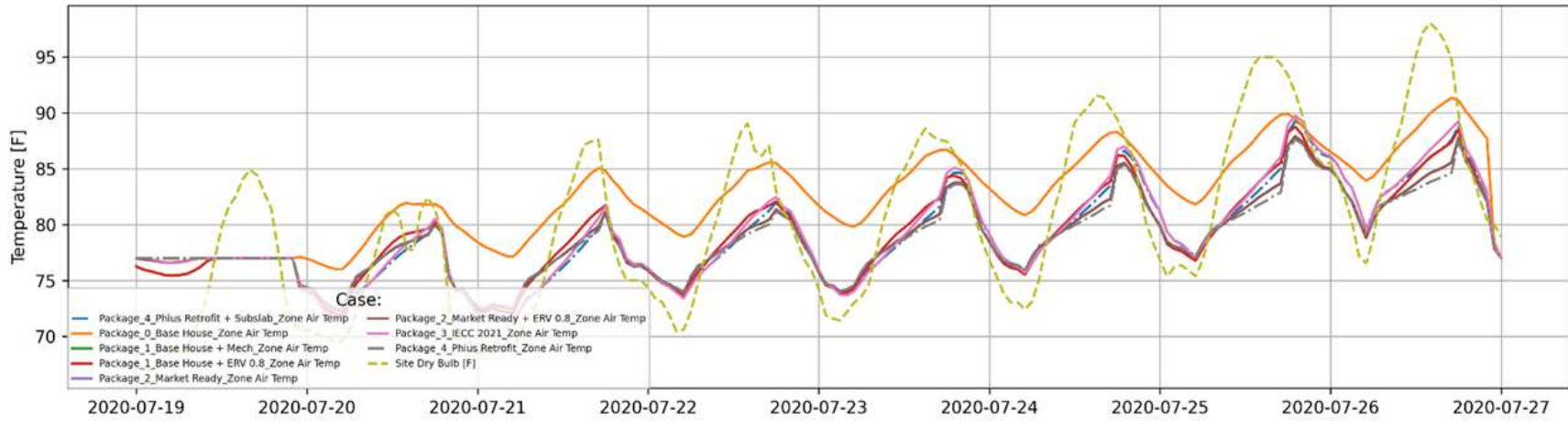
### EL-PASO\_NV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



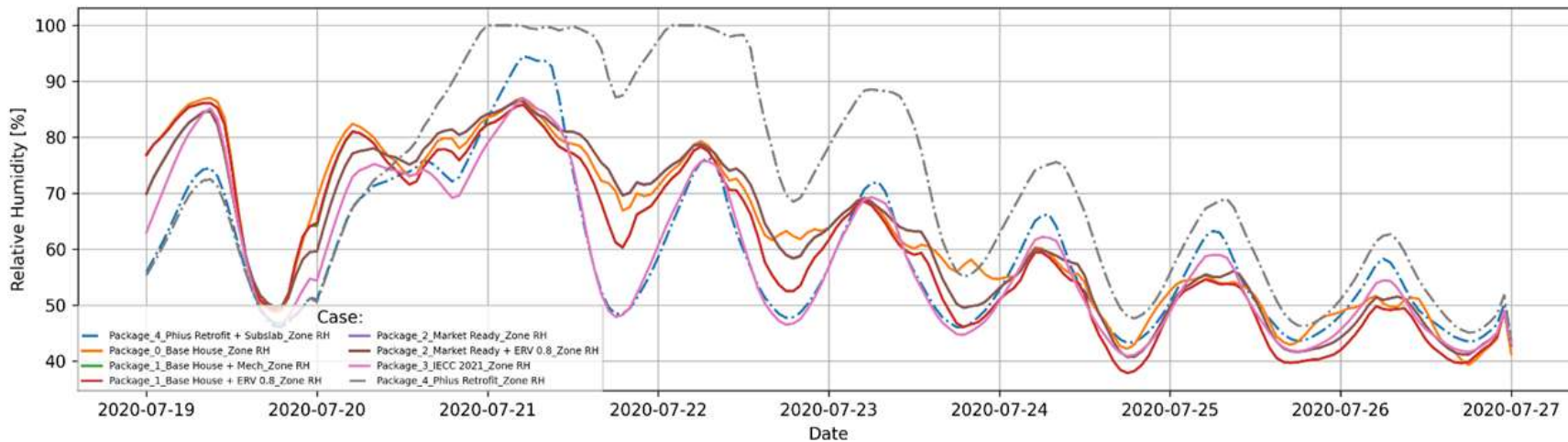
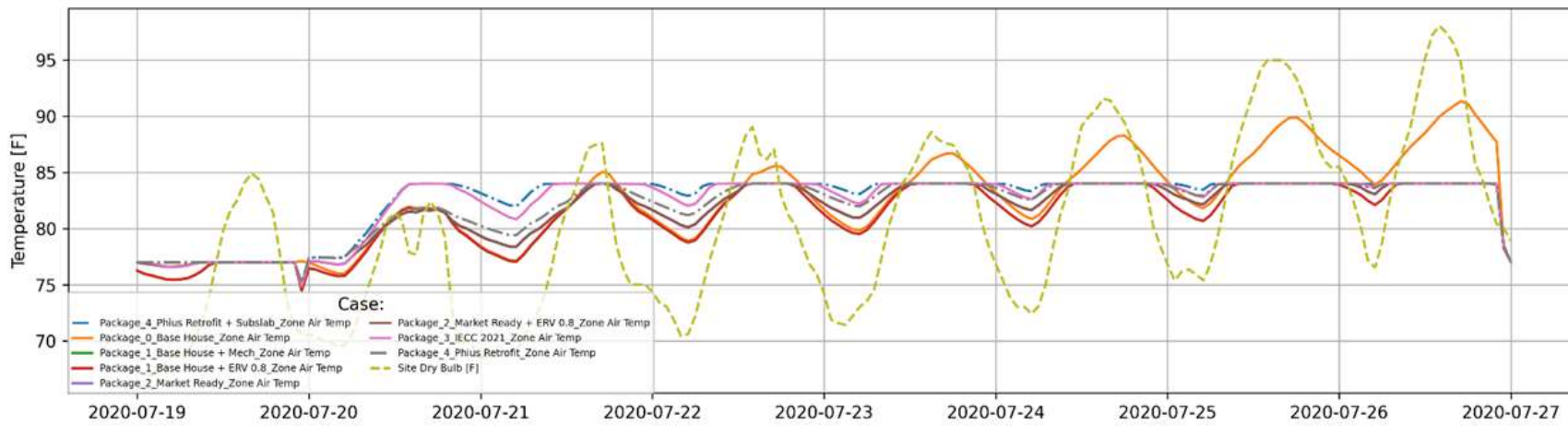
# EL-PASO\_SNV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



# EL-PASO\_SNV+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



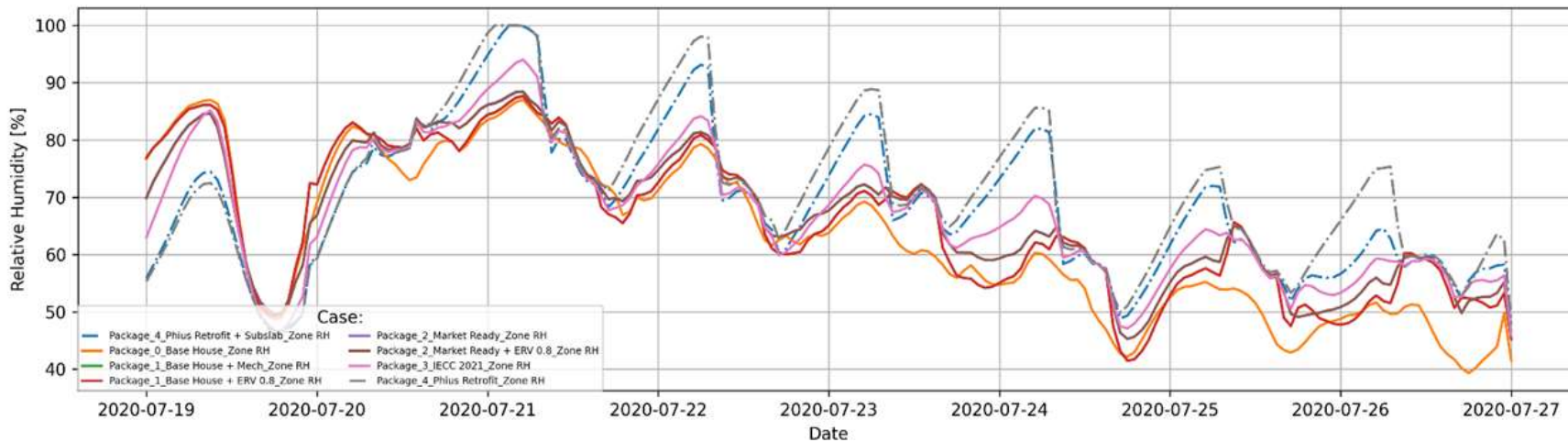
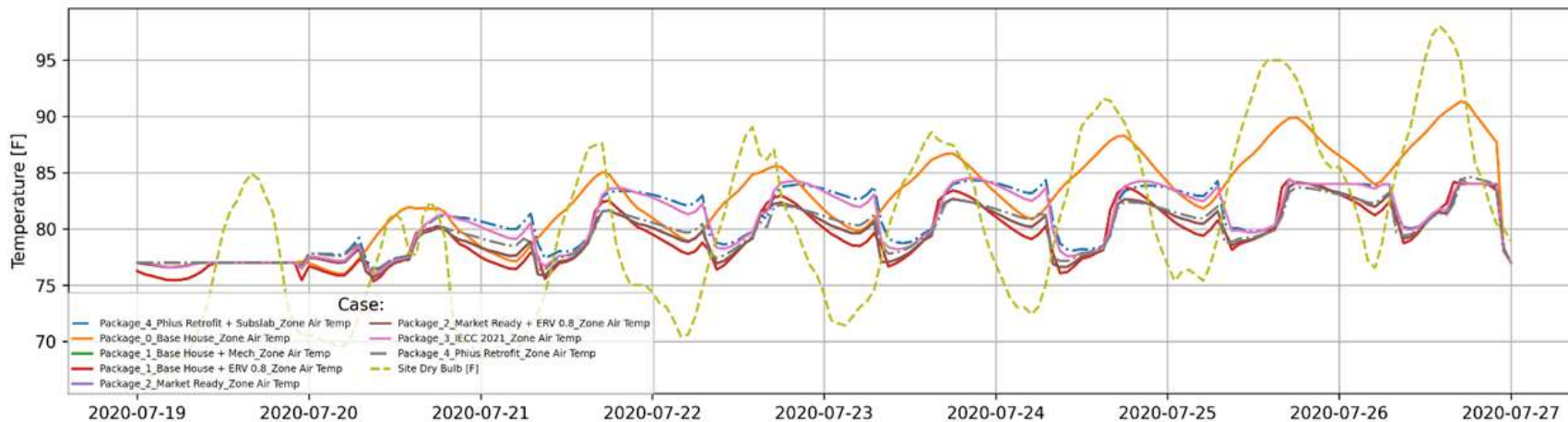
### EL-PASO\_HP\_Cooling Outage Resilience



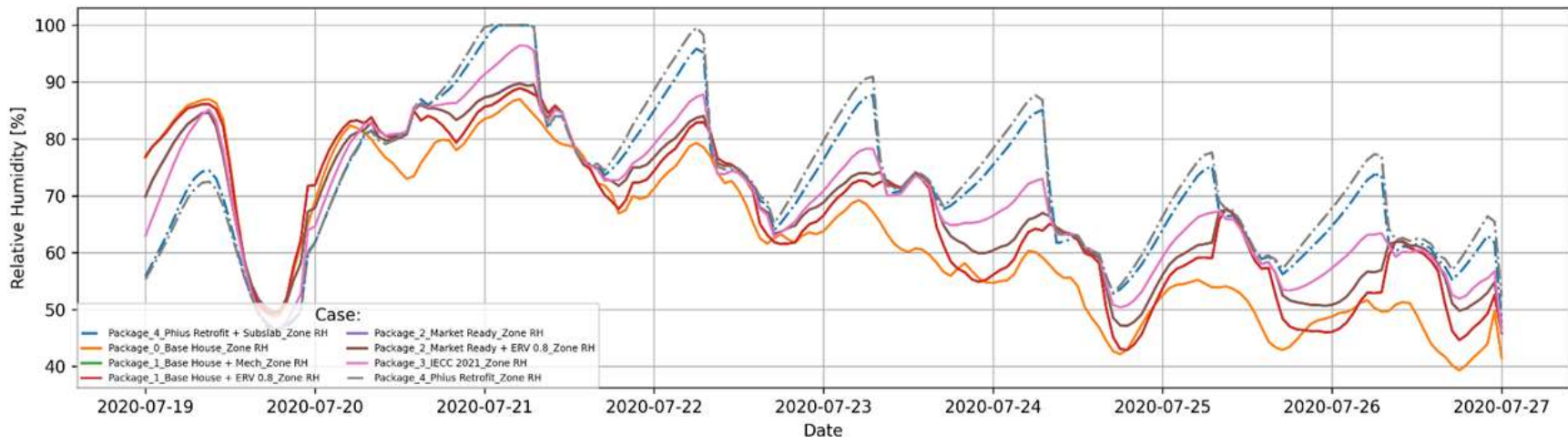
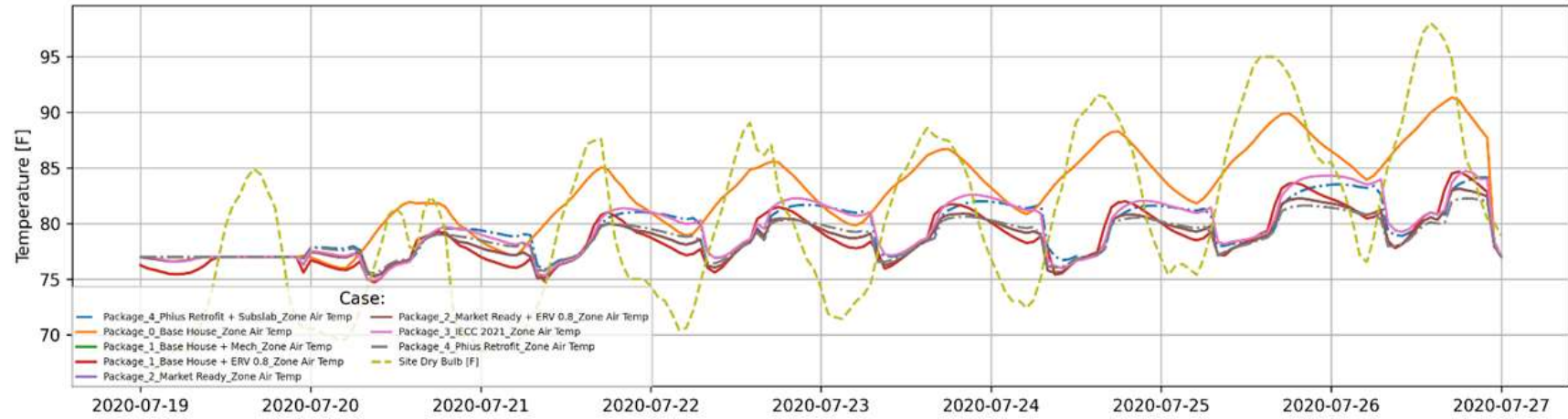




### EL-PASO\_EC\_Cooling Outage Resilience



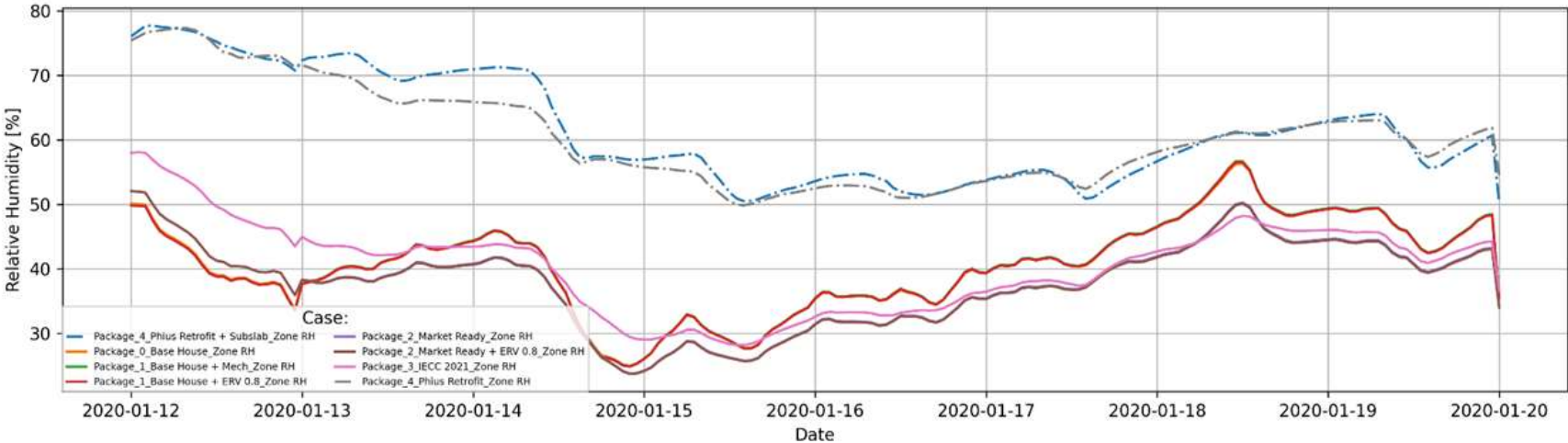
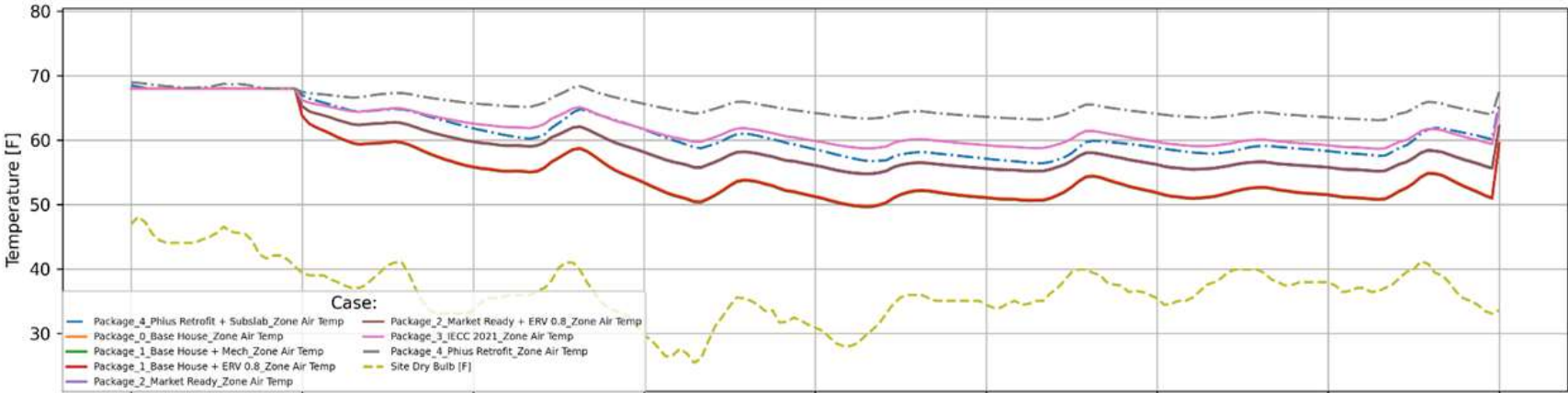
# EL-PASO\_EC+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



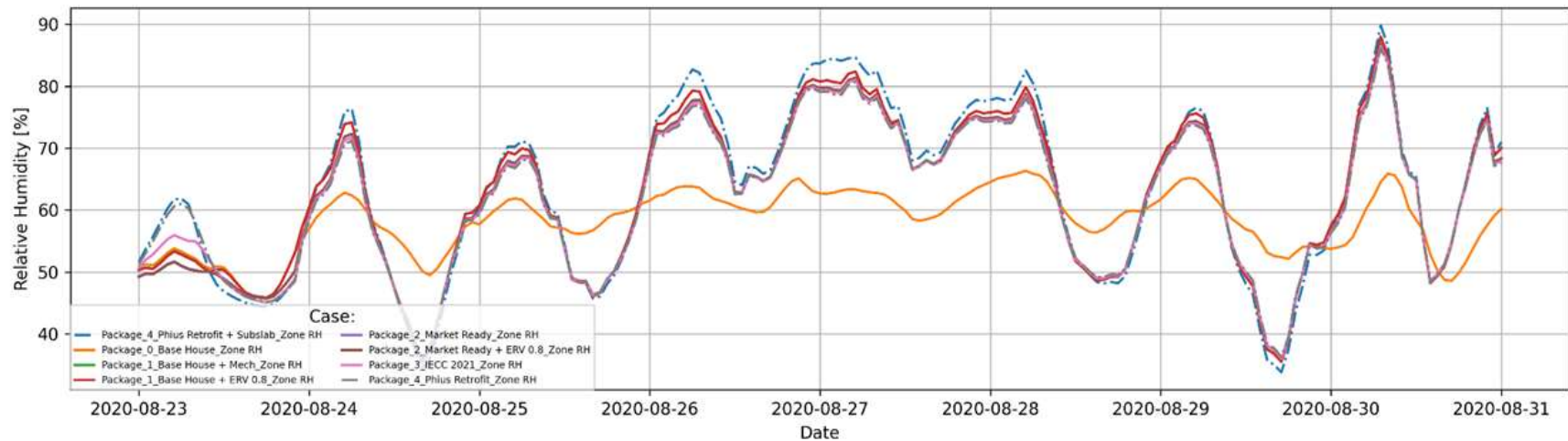
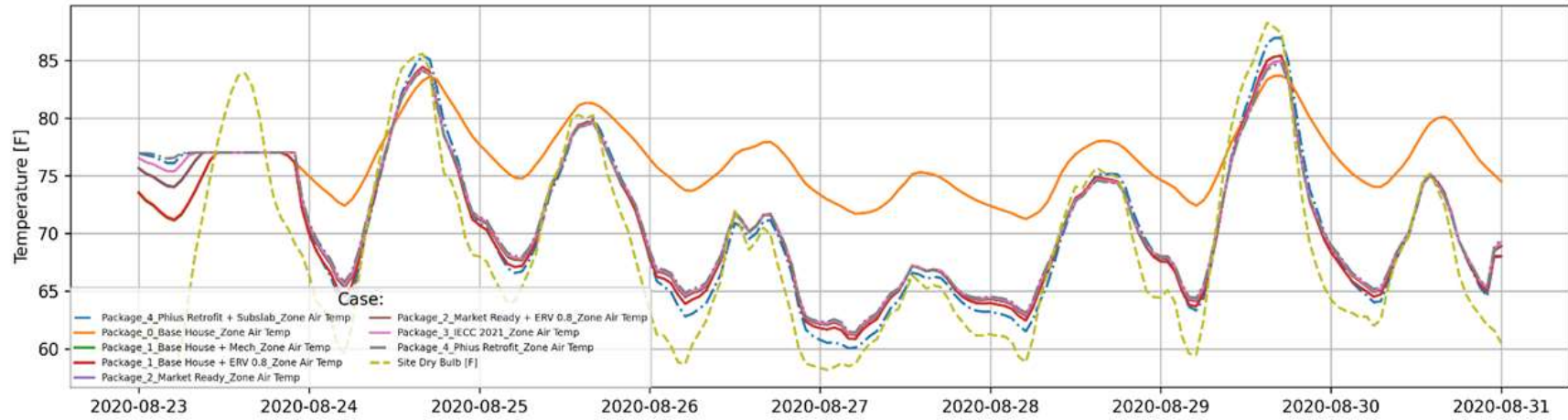
Seattle, WA



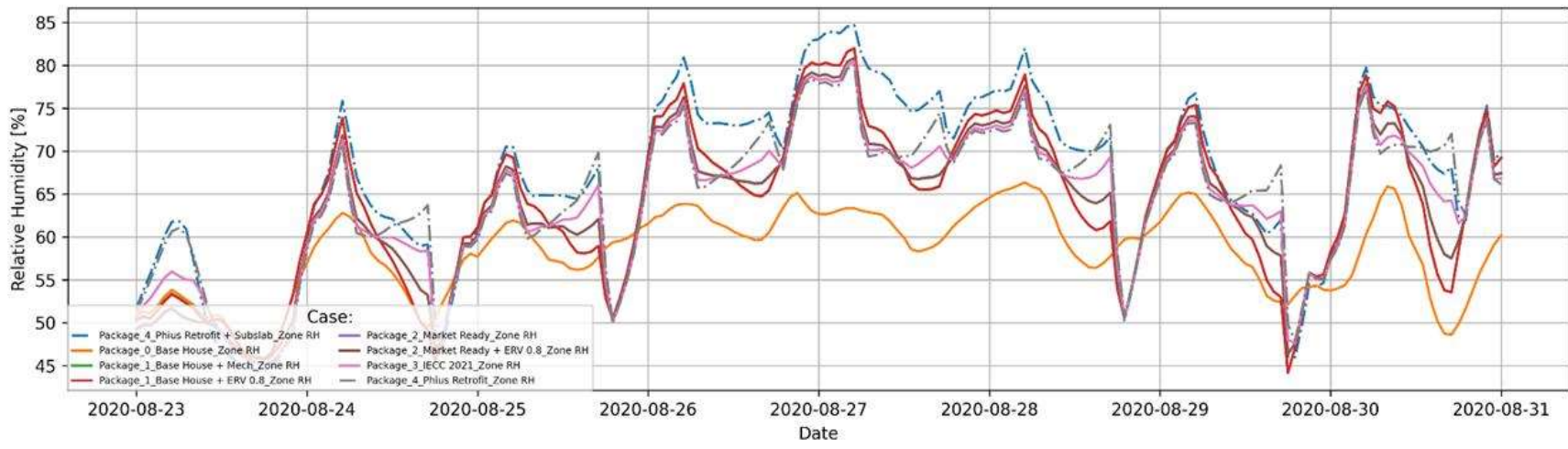
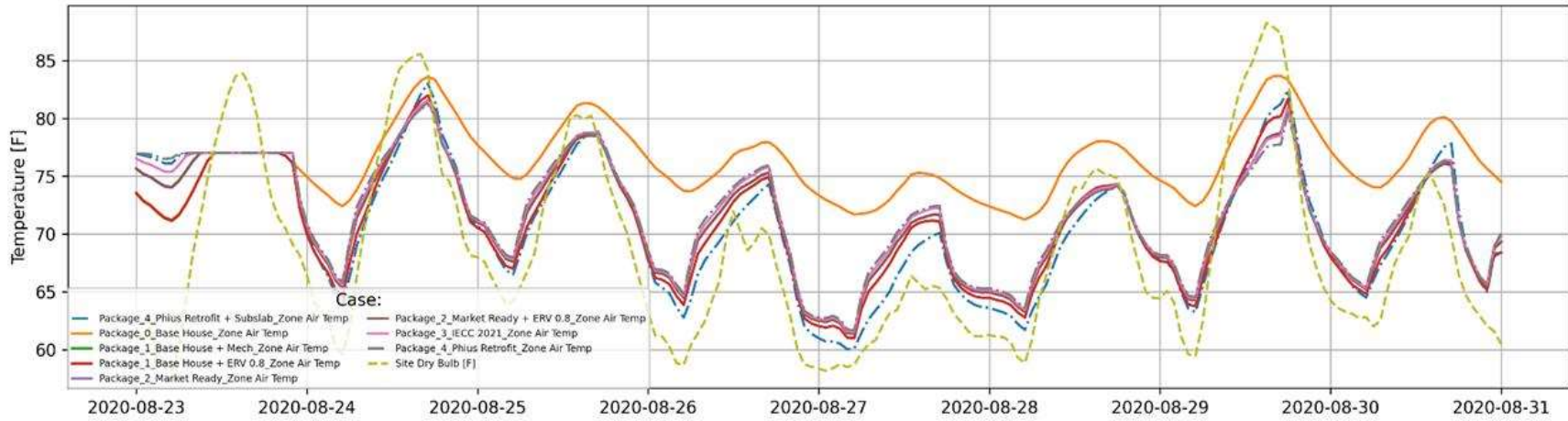
### SEATTLE\_NV\_Heating Outage Resilience



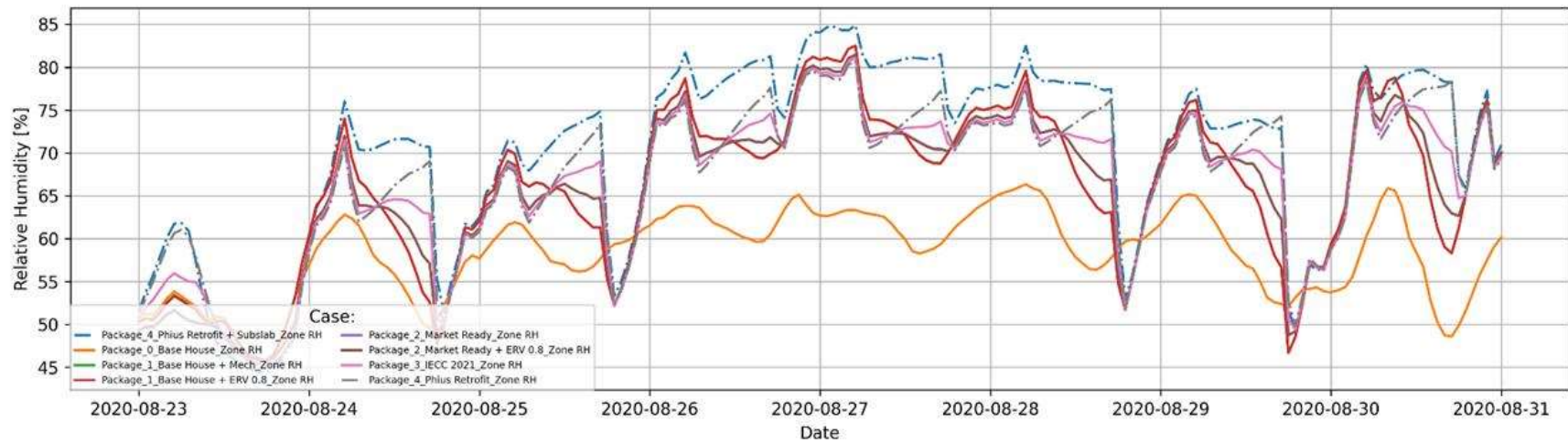
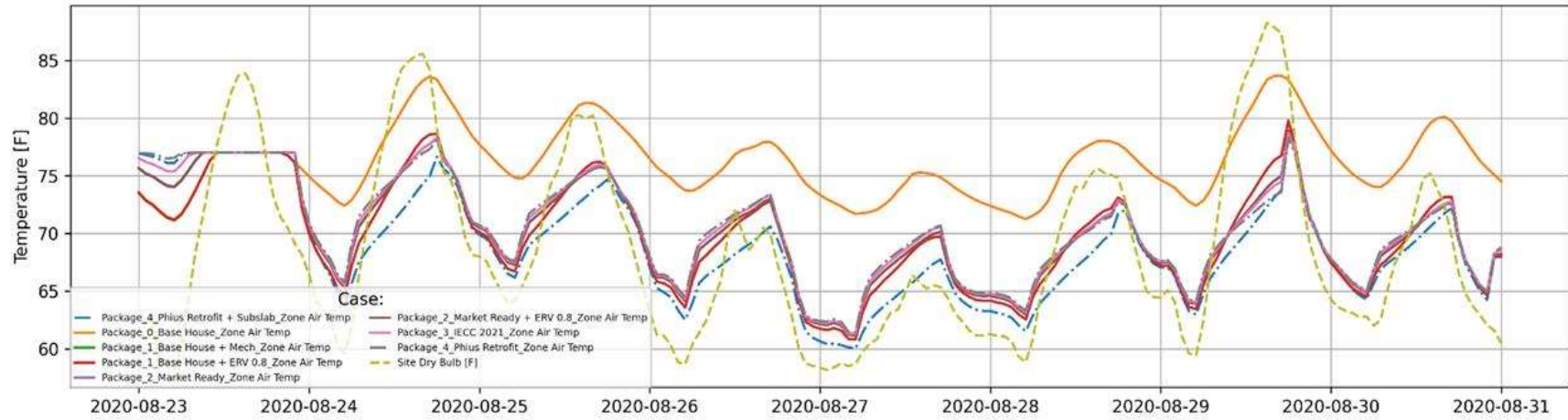
# SEATTLE\_NV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



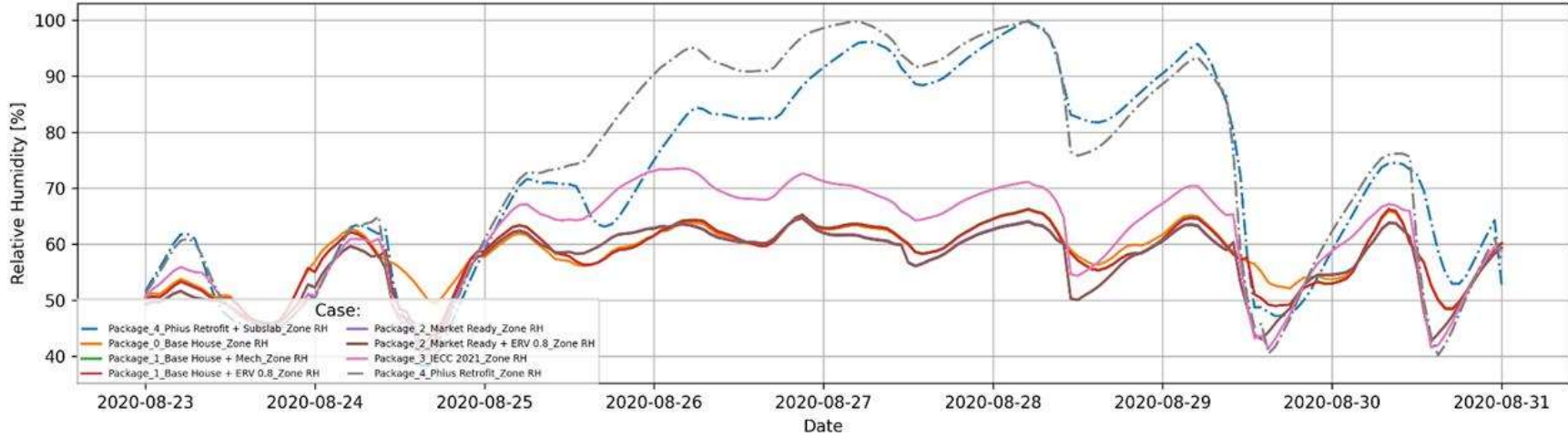
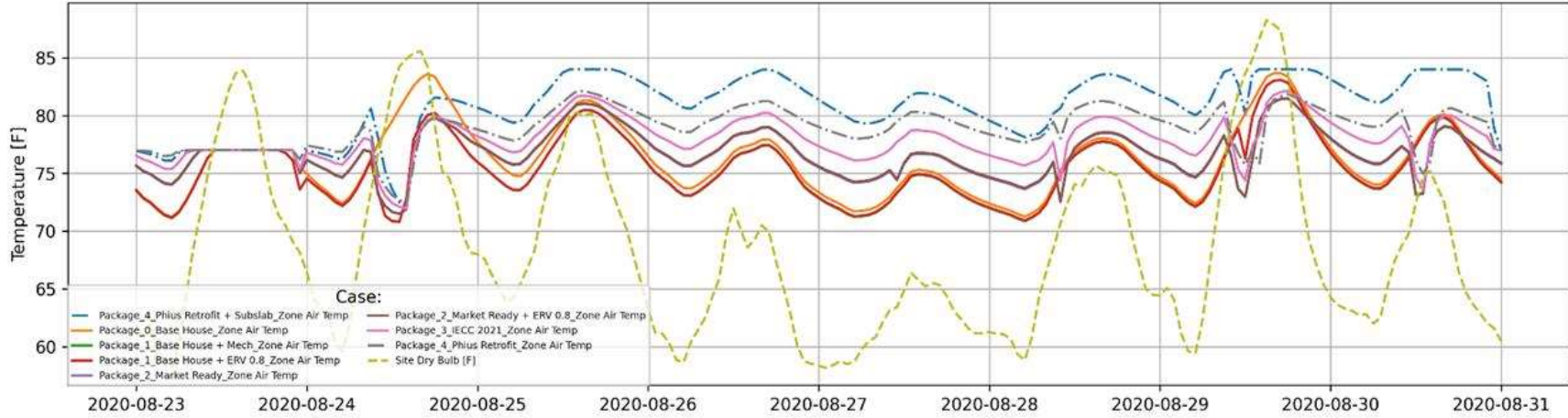
# SEATTLE\_SNV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



# SEATTLE\_SNV+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience

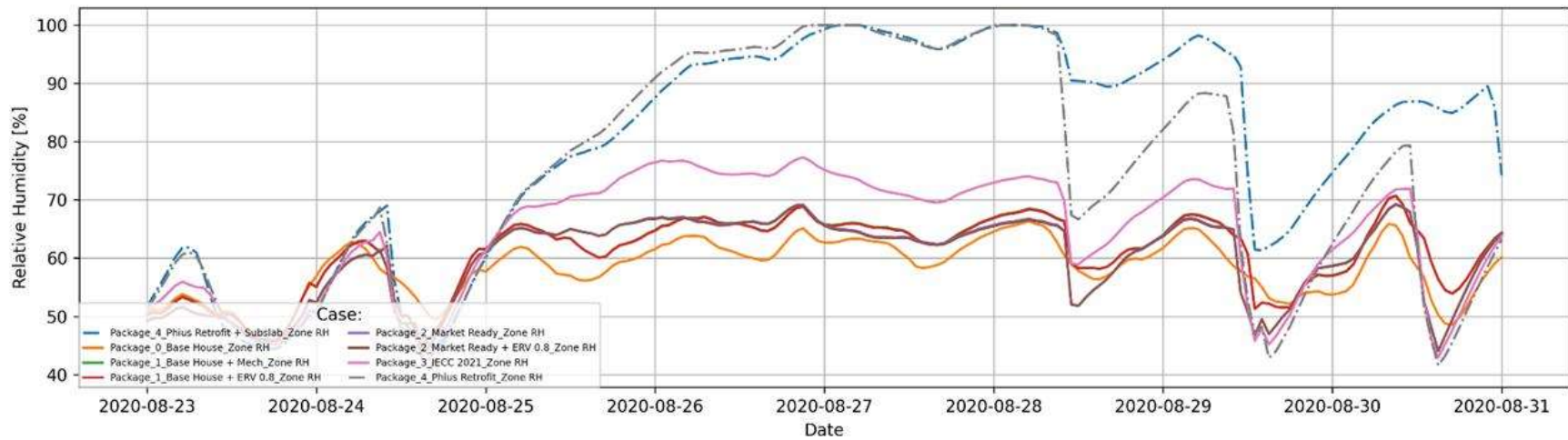
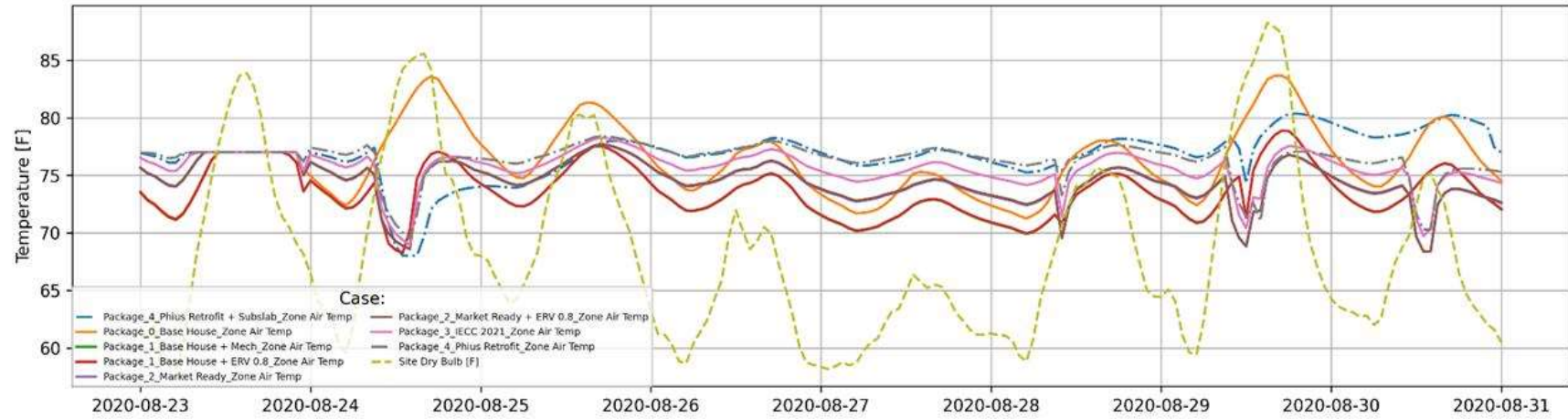


### SEATTLE\_HP\_Cooling Outage Resilience





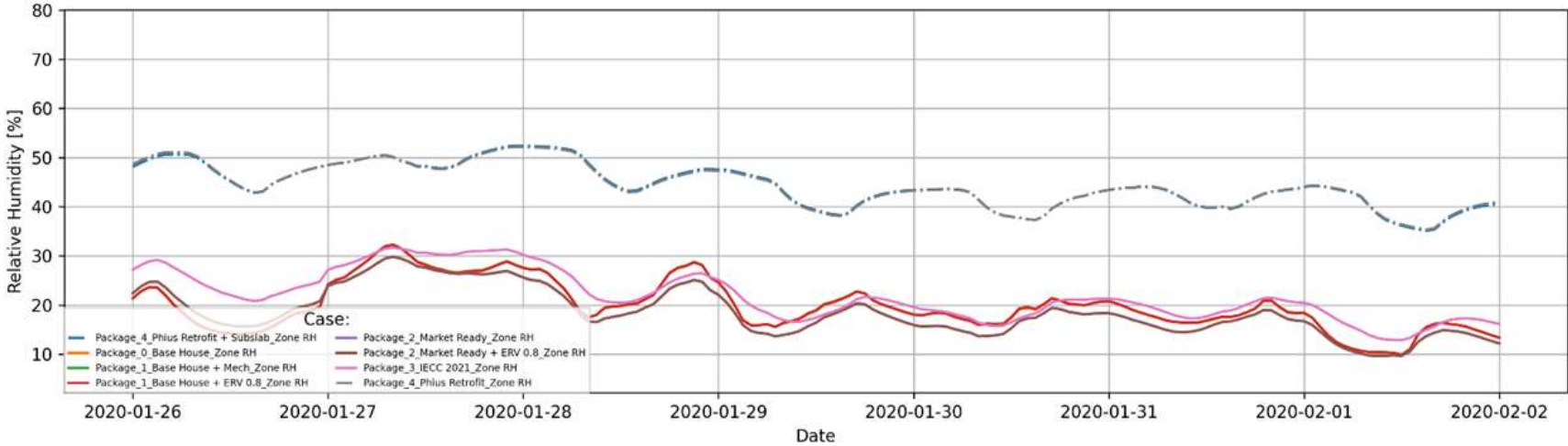
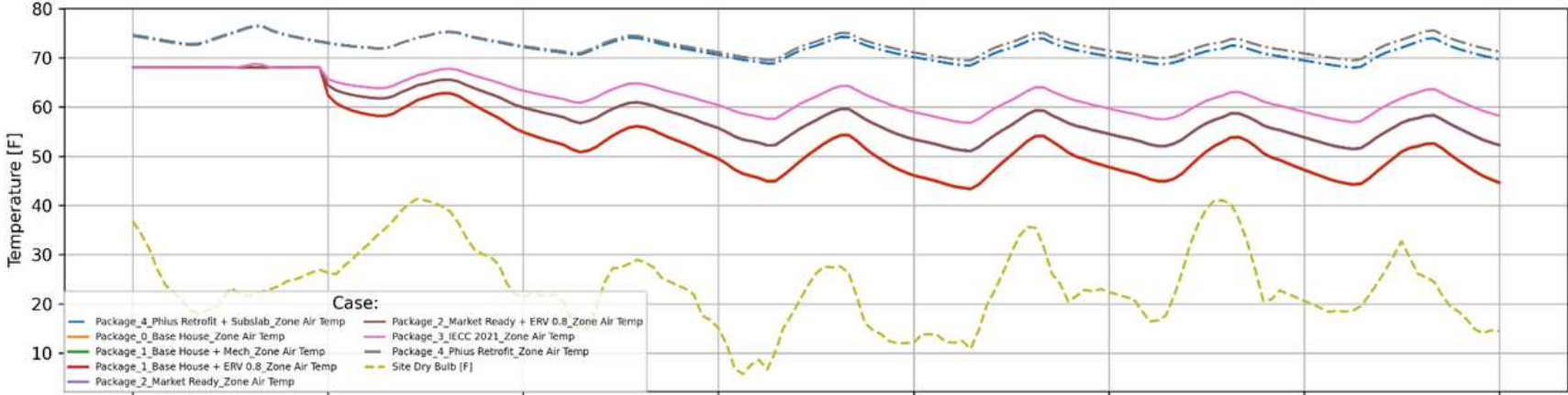
# SEATTLE\_HP+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



Denver, CO

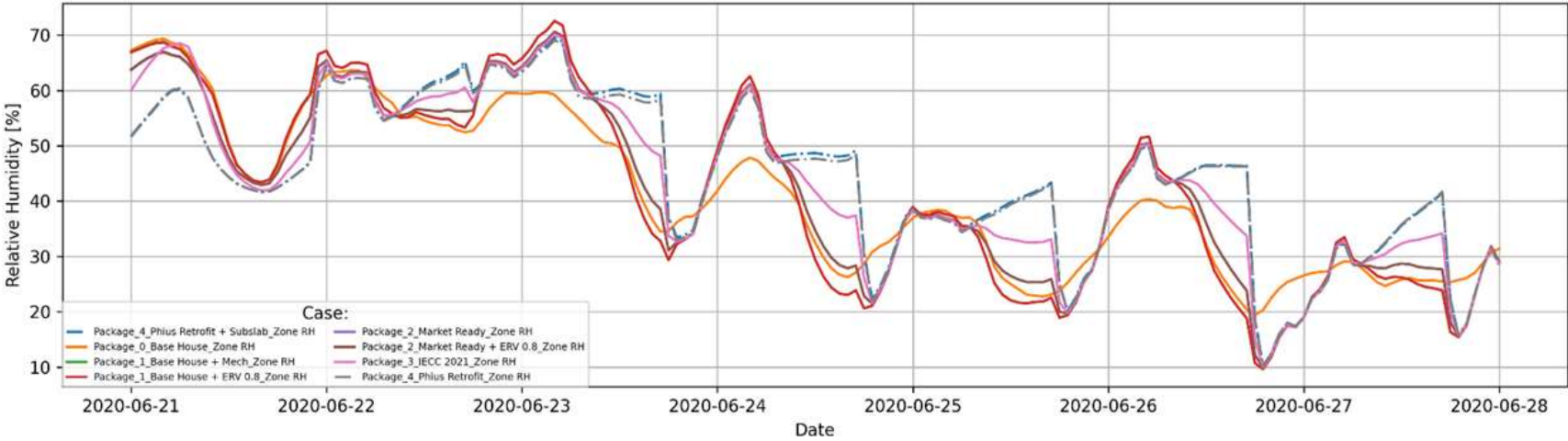
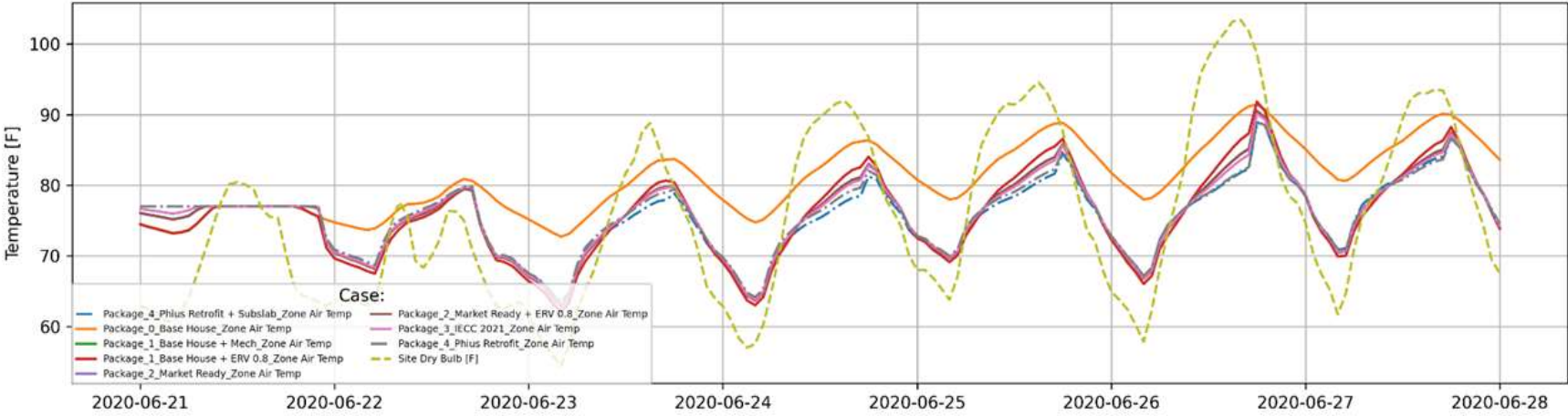


# DENVER\_NV\_Heating Outage Resilience



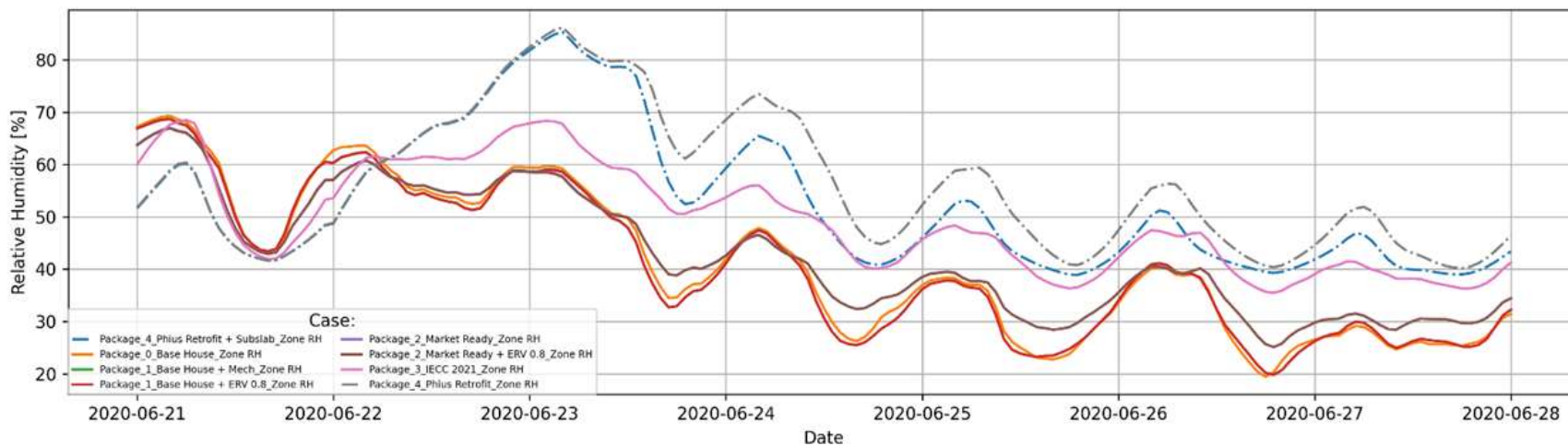
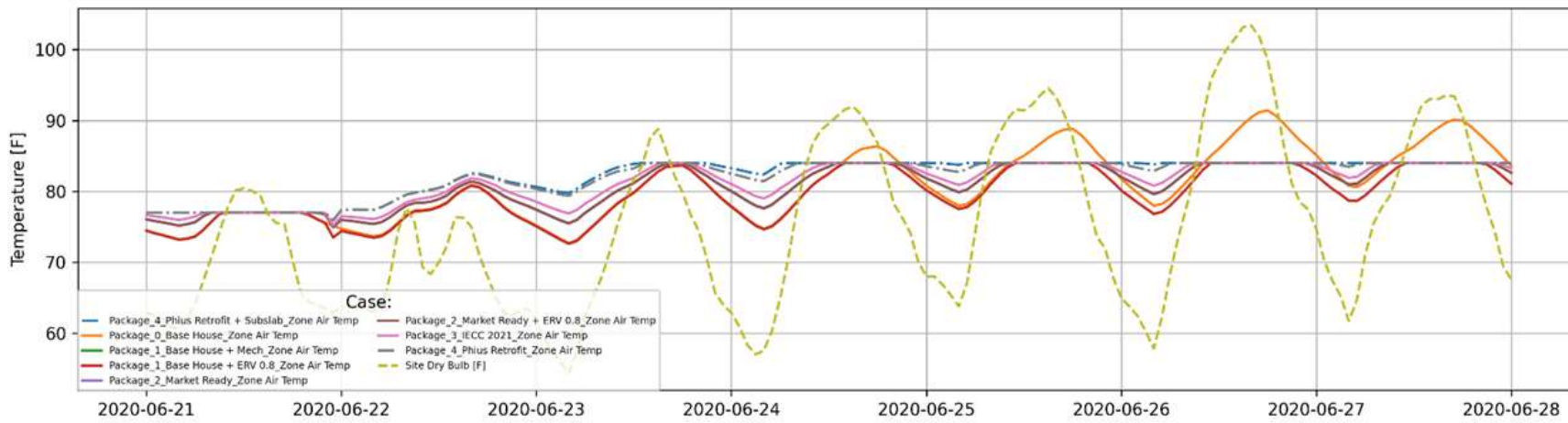


### DENVER\_SNV\_Cooling Outage Resilience

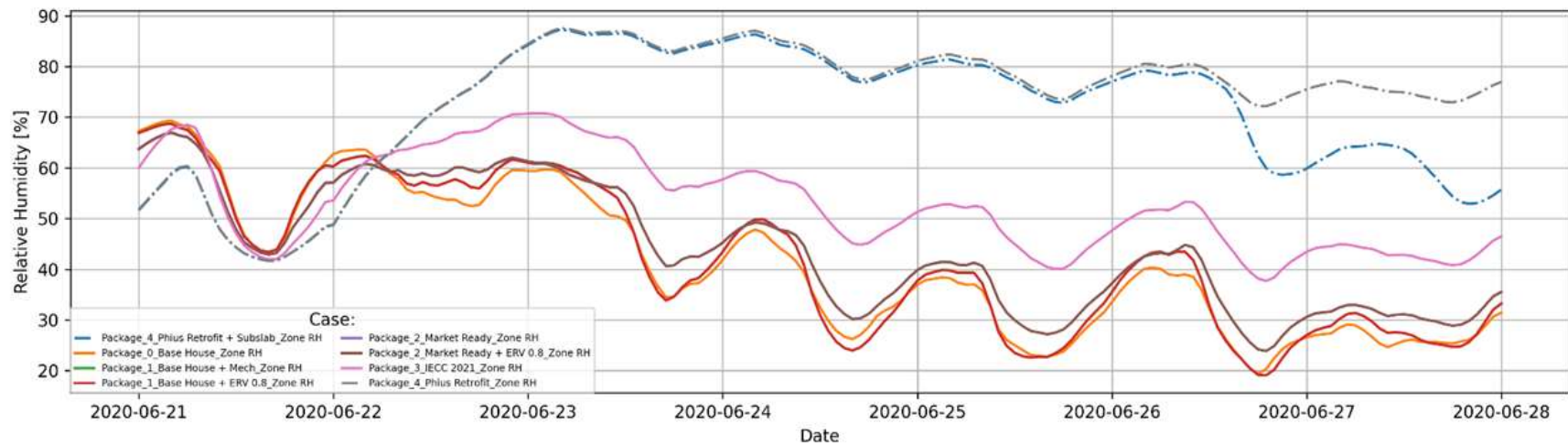
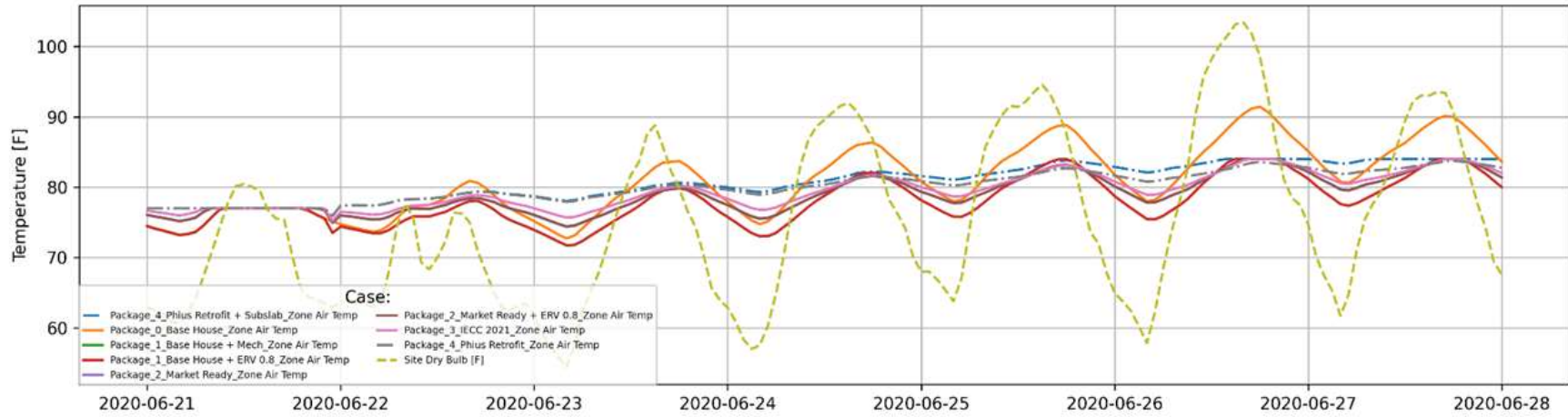




### DENVER\_HP\_Cooling Outage Resilience

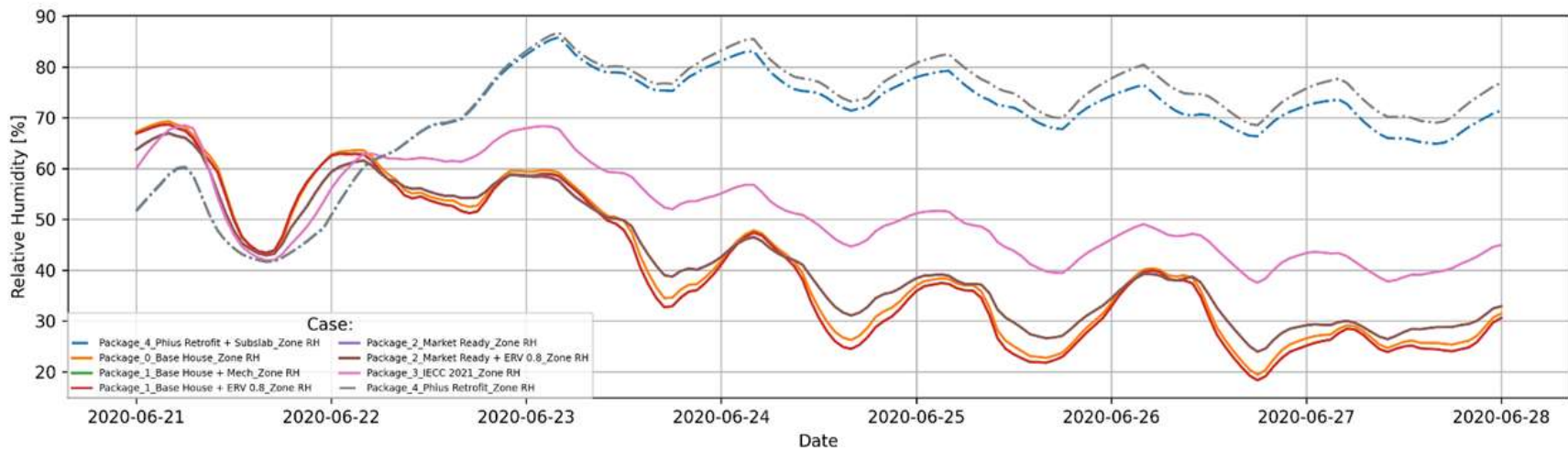
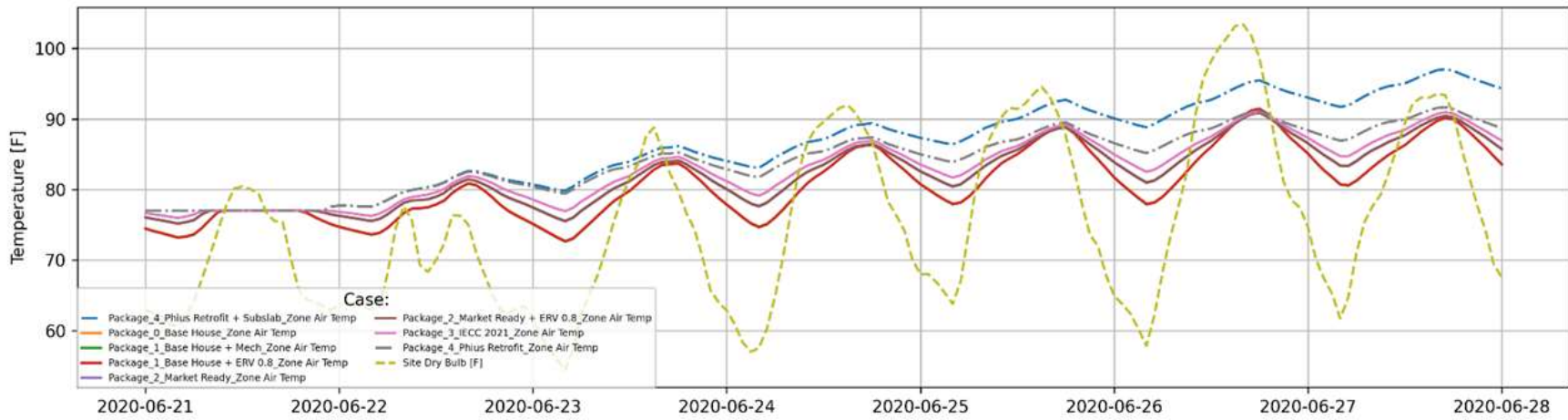


# DENVER\_HP+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience

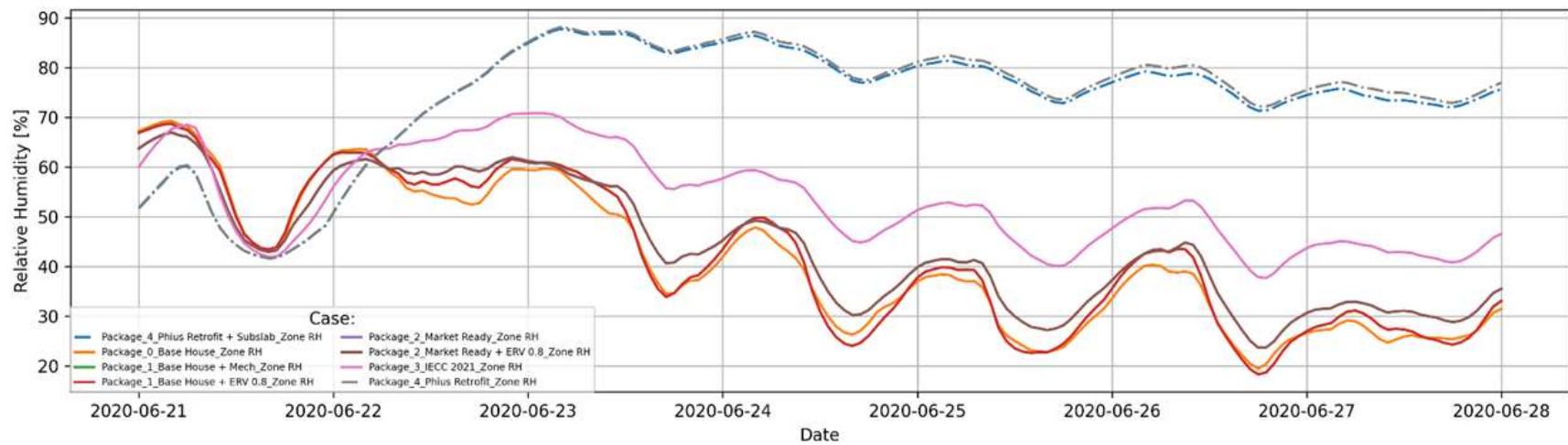
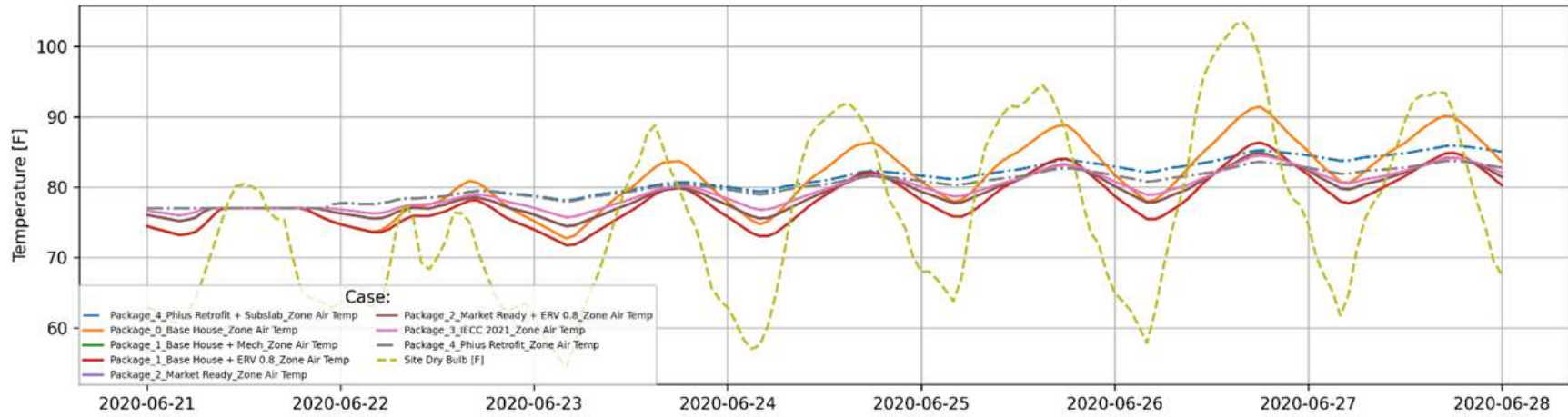




# DENVER\_EC\_Cooling Outage Resilience



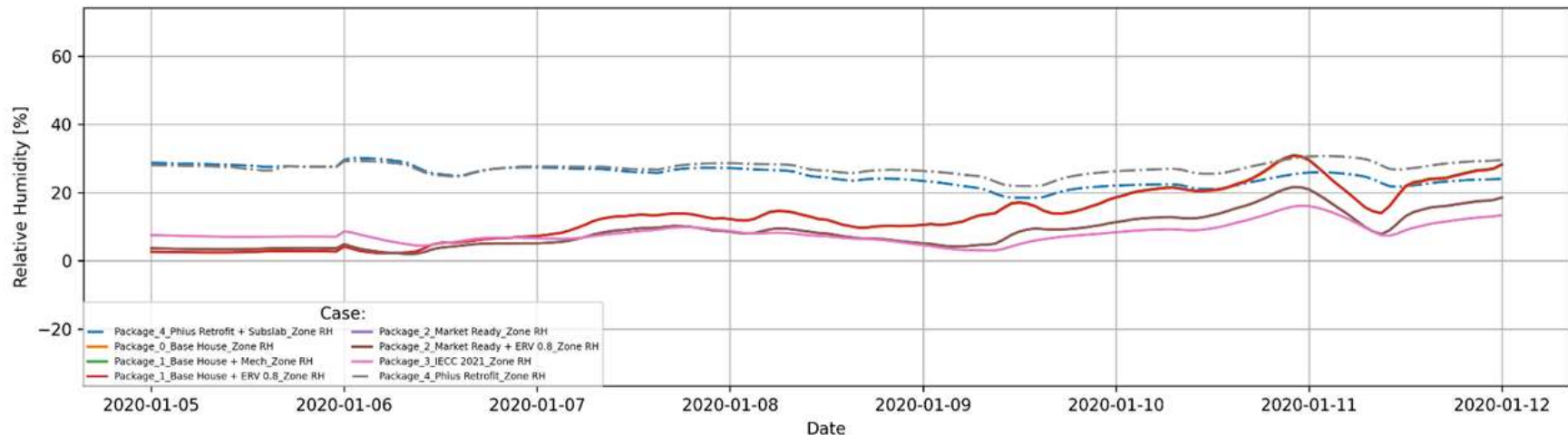
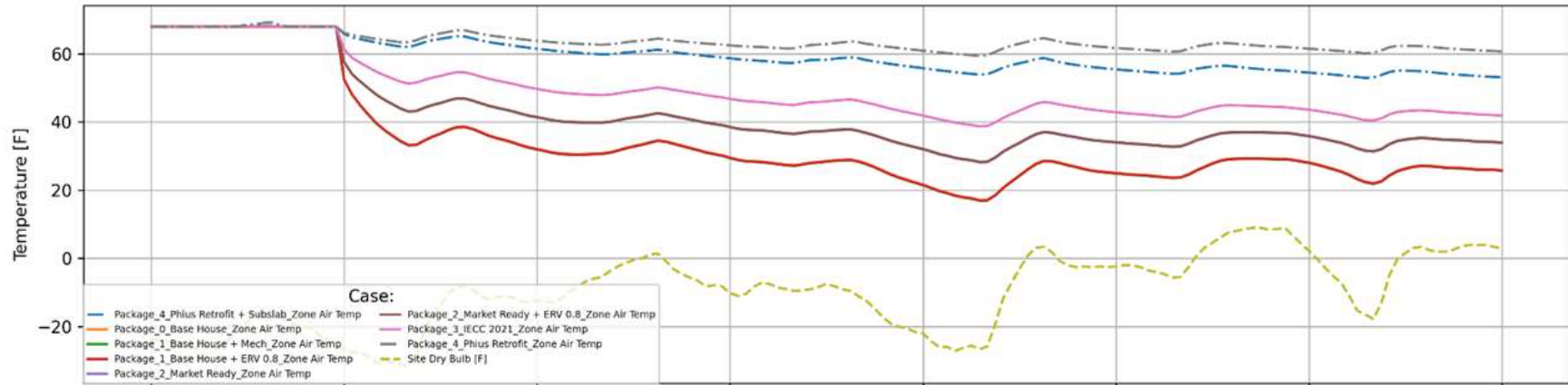
# DENVER\_EC+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



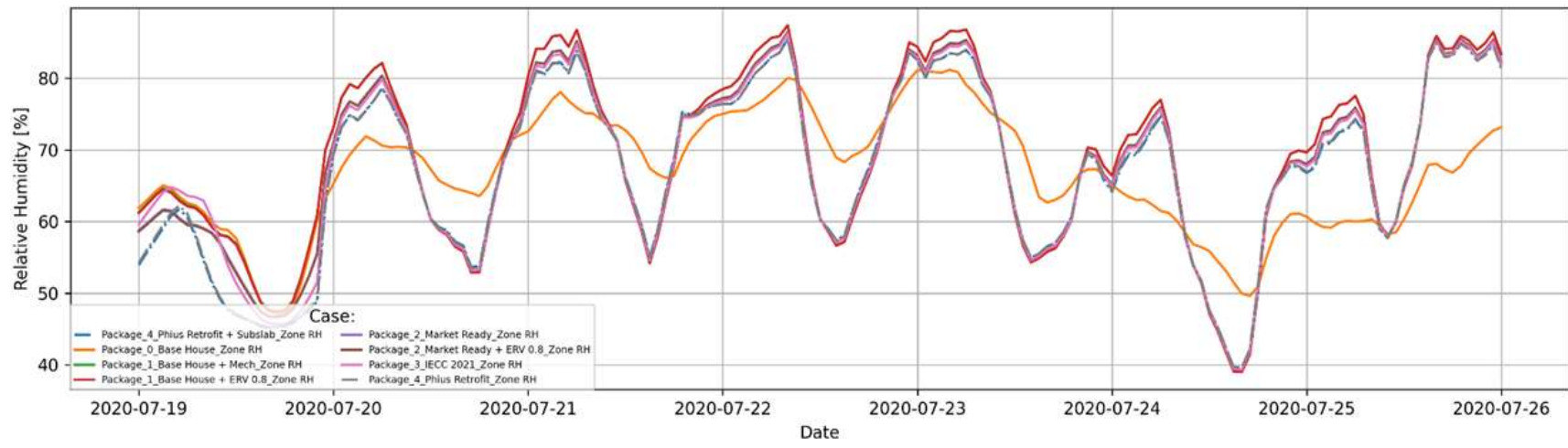
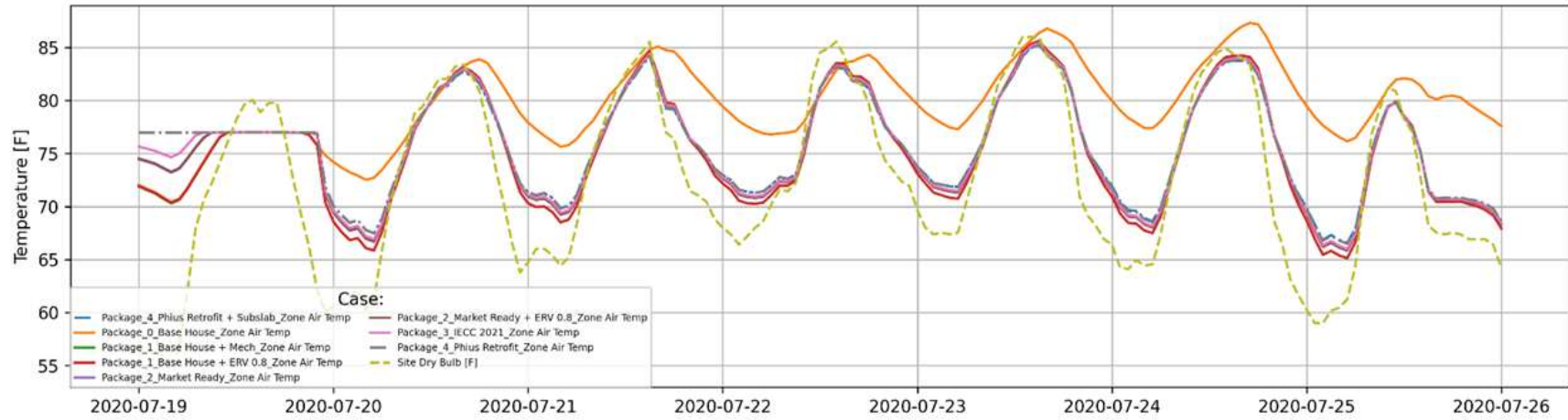
International Falls, MN



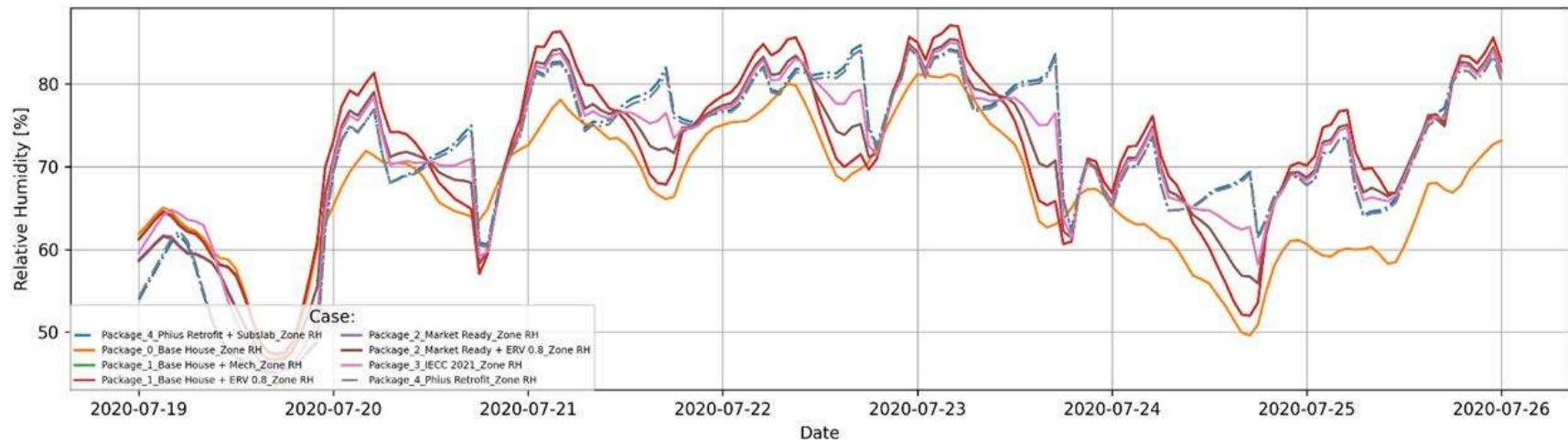
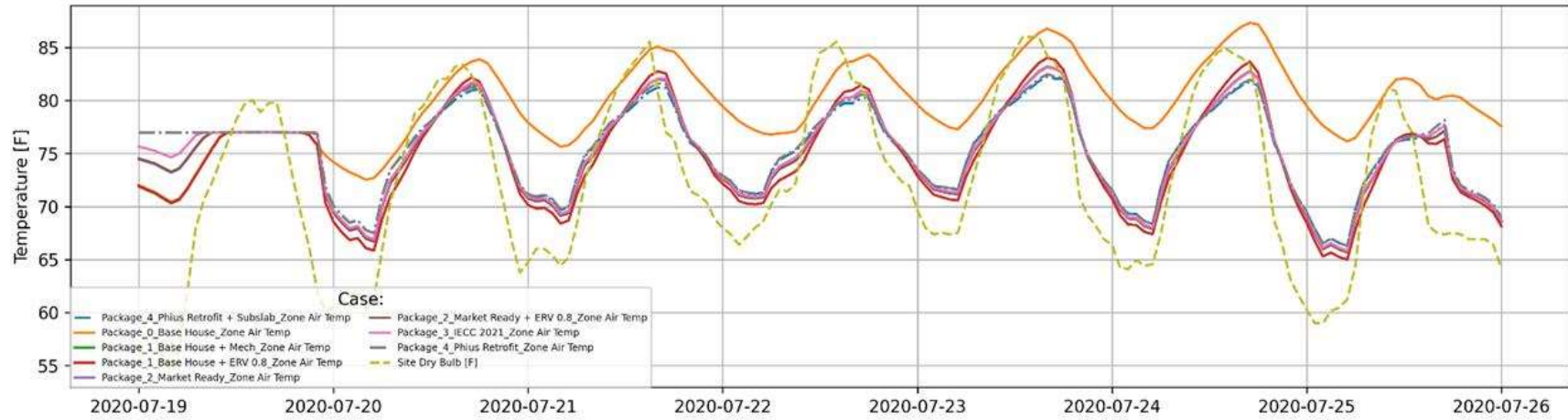
# IFAP\_NV\_Heating Outage Resilience



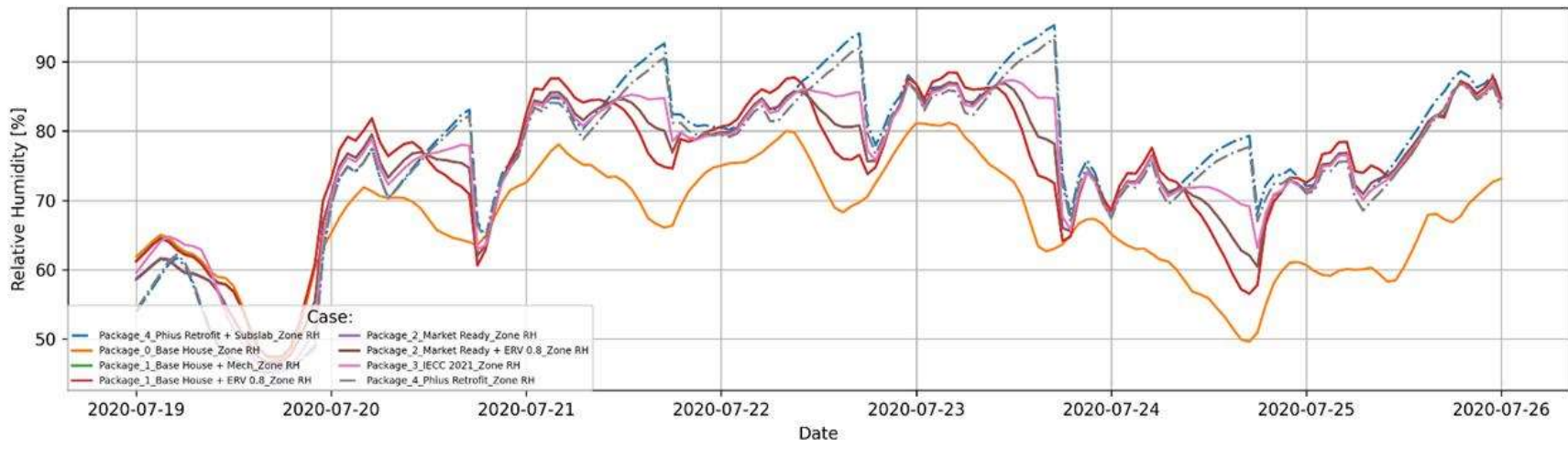
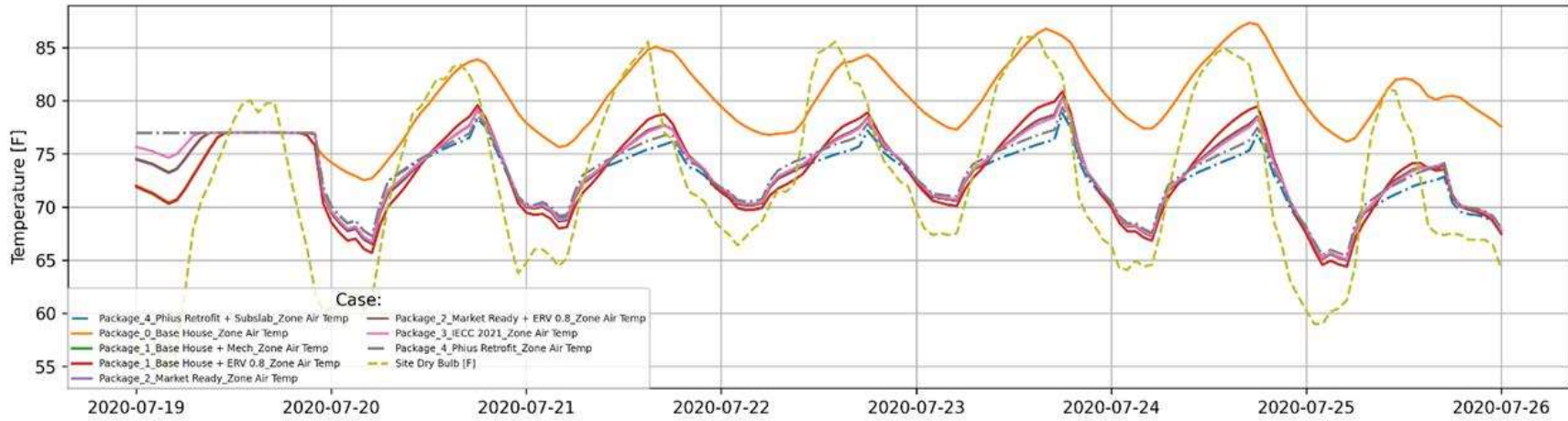
# IFAP\_NV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



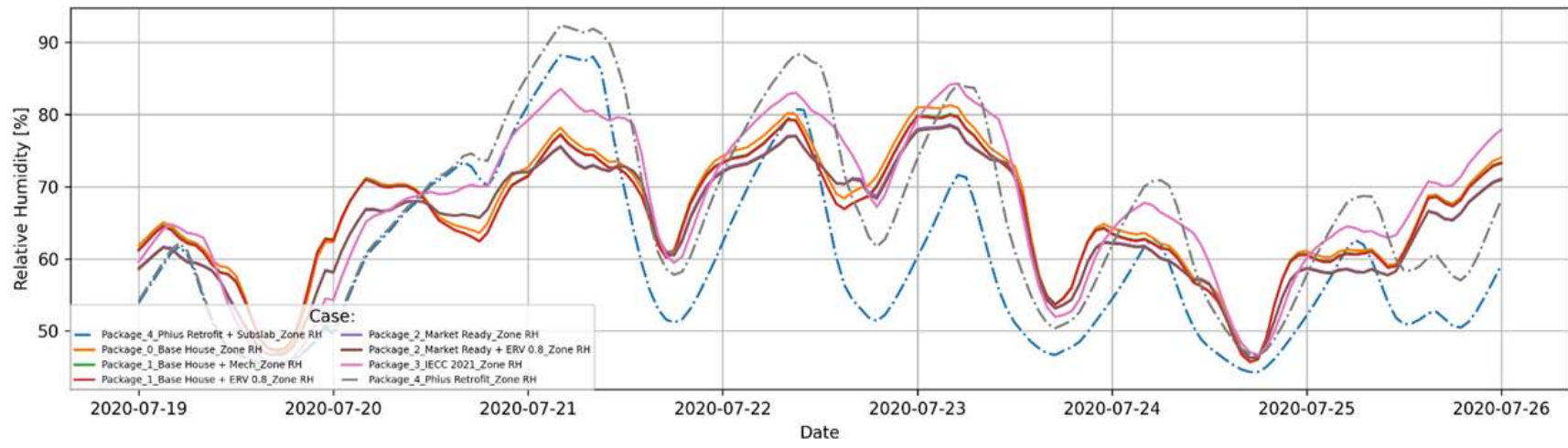
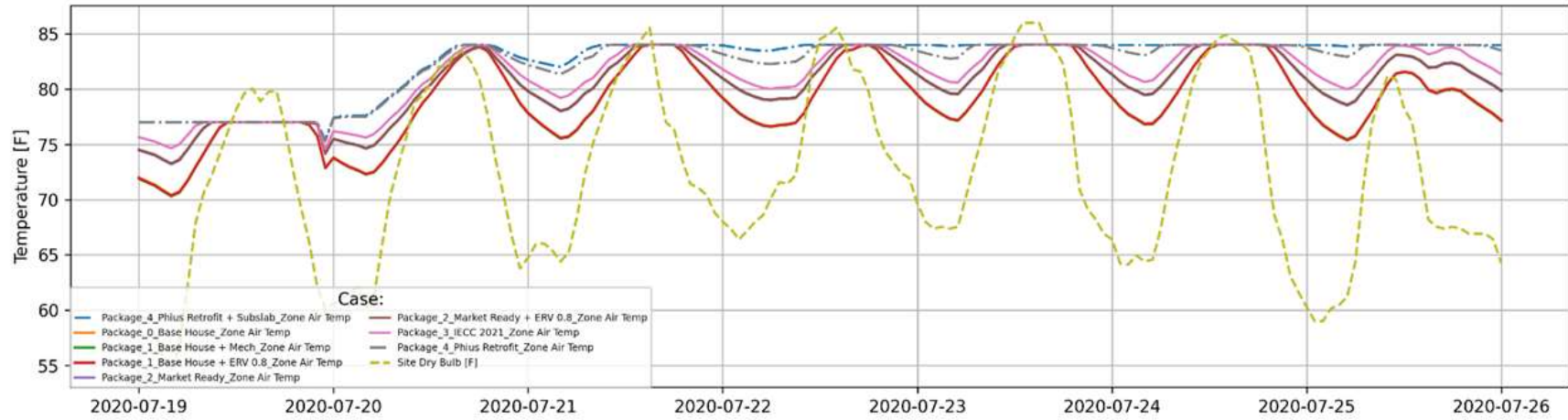
# IFAP\_SNV\_Cooling Outage Resilience



### IFAP\_SNV+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience



# IFAP\_HP\_Cooling Outage Resilience





### IFAP\_HP+Shd\_Cooling Outage Resilience

