

Frequently Asked Questions

Support for the Watlow F4T with INTUITION[®]

Can the Watlow F4T with INTUITION[®] be used with SpecView?

The F4T is supported by SpecView starting with version 3. Any F4T controller can communicate with SpecView using Modbus[®] TCP when connected via Ethernet. An F4T controller equipped with a Modbus[®] RTU 232/485 communications flex module can also communicate with SpecView via a serial COM port.

Can SpecView toggle a key on my F4T's home page?

By connecting a variable block and the key block to an "OR" logic block in COMPOSER[®] you can configure the F4T to toggle the signal from the logic block based on the F4T key or the variable. Add a variable block instrument to the SpecView project and use a button on the GDW to set the variable block's *Digital Value* parameter *on* and another to set it *off*. Add a logic block instrument to your project and you can indicate the state of the signal with the logic block's *Output Value* parameter.

Support for Watlow's EZ-ZONE[®] Controllers

Which products communicate via Watlow EZ-ZONE[®] Standard Bus?

EZ-ZONE ST, PM and RM products communicate with SpecView via Standard Bus on 485 networks. That means no field bus communications option such as Modbus[®] is required. EZ-ZONE RMC, RME, RMH, RML and RMS modules are supported. There is limited support for RMA modules. RUIs are not supported.

What protocols does SpecView support for use with Watlow EZ-ZONE products?

See the SpecView specification sheet for a list of compatible Watlow products and supported protocols. The easiest way to communicate with EZ-ZONE products is using Standard Bus. EZ-ZONE products can also communicate with SpecView via Modbus[®] RTU and Modbus[®] TCP, but only the parameters typically necessary for operating, data logging, trending and programming profiles are supported.

Why don't I see Watlow EZ-ZONE[®] Standard Bus in the protocol list?

Starting with version 3 SpecView installs both 32-bit and 64-bit programs. Watlow EZ-ZONE Standard Bus is available only when running the 32-bit SpecView executable (sv3.exe). The 32-bit version of the program runs in both 32-bit and 64-bit versions of Windows.

How many products can communicate on one COM port using Watlow EZ-ZONE[®] Standard Bus?

Standard Bus allows communication with up to 16 EZ-ZONE STs, PMs and RM modules plus one RM Access module per COM port. To communicate with more EZ-ZONE devices you will need to add the multi-port option to SpecView. Even with 17 or fewer devices, it may be desirable to divide the EZ-ZONE units into more than one Standard Bus network for faster updates.

Can I use EZ-ZONE Configurator and SpecView at the same time?

Yes, Standard Bus allows more than one PC software package to communicate on the same network. You may notice that updates are slower when you do this because the network bandwidth must be shared. Also note that your computer will need two 485 COM ports, one for each program.

Using SpecView with Watlow Controllers

How do I find the controller parameter I am looking for in SpecView's Variable List?

The variables list is available in Edit Mode. It organizes controller parameters or variables by instrument. SpecView Variables and User Variables are first in the list. The instruments after these contain variables from devices with which SpecView is communicating. Many Watlow controllers are represented by several instruments. Click the plus sign next to an instrument name to reveal that instrument's variables.

Generally, variables are ordered as they appear in manuals and product menus. Operation parameters such as process variable and set point are first. Setup menu items are next and less frequently accessed items such as diagnostics parameters are at the end. See the *Using Watlow Products with SpecView Manual Addendum* for the details of which instruments support which controller options.

Can SpecView communicate with a mix of controller models on one serial communications port?

Yes, as long as all the controllers use the same protocol, such as Modbus® RTU, and communications settings, such as baud rate. Because not all compatible devices are supported by the same driver in SpecView, you may have to scan the network more than once to detect all the compatible devices.

Can I restrict access to some items on a screen with password protection while allowing free access to others?

Yes, the password level requirement can be individually set for each item on a screen.

Can I add a note (annotation) to a trend chart?

Click the graph and add a note at any time. Chart notes can also be added automatically based on events.

Downloading SpecView

Is SpecView available for download on the Watlow website?

Yes, you can find it on the *Literature & Downloads* tab on the *SpecView Software* page under *Products, Controllers, and Software*.

Can I try SpecView before I buy it?

Yes, download and install SpecView to try any of the sample projects or even develop your own project. The program is installed exactly the same as a purchased copy, but runs in "Demo" mode which limits communications to 10 minutes. The 10-minute limit is reset each time you restart SpecView, choose *Disable All (fully offline)* from the *Online Features* menu, or choose *Edit Mode (go-offline)* from the *File* menu.

Is SpecView different when purchased from Watlow rather than from SpecView Corp.?

The installed software is exactly the same. However, when you purchase SpecView from Watlow, you get a single point of support for Watlow controllers and SpecView software, the Watlow applications engineers who answer questions about hardware, communications wiring and controller and software functions.

Update Plans

Can I update from version 2.5 to version 3, and is there a charge?

If you purchased SpecView from Watlow, the key is already enabled for version 3. If you get the new version within the update period for your key, there is no charge. If your update plan has expired, you can purchase an upgrade to start a new two-year update plan then install version 3.

How can I tell when the update plan for my key ends?

- In version 3 on the Help menu; look for *Free Updates until*.
- In version 2.5 choose Help/Registration Info... and look for *Free Updates until* in the *Enabled Options* list. The date is formatted dd-mm-yy, so 03-05-17 is May 3, 2017.

Can I use SpecView after the update plan expires?

Yes, SpecView continues to run, but new updates cannot be installed without starting a new update plan.

Ordering Options and Field Upgrades

How can I add optional features or extend the free updates period?

SpecView allows field upgrades. There is no need to return the key or disk to Watlow. See the *SpecView Software Field Upgrade Order Form* on the Watlow website for step-by-step instructions on how to order an upgrade and contact your Watlow agent or distributor.

Do I need the multi-port option?

You need multi-port if any of these apply:

- Not all the devices communicate using the same protocol
- Devices are connected to more than one communications port on the computer
- Some devices communicate via Ethernet and some via a serial port, for example, you want to communicate with an F4T controller via Ethernet and an EZ-ZONE PM limit via 485
- You want to break up a 485 network to speed up communications

What options do I need to purchase to log data?

Without any additional options SpecView records user-selected parameters and variables as frequently as once per second in secure, encrypted files from which data can be exported to Excel®-compatible CSV (comma separated value) reports. The optional strategy controller feature can automate many data logging tasks including exporting reports.

When should I choose the historical replay option?

The historical replay feature plays logged data on any user-created screen. If all of the variables on the screen are logged, the replayed screen presents data exactly as it did while the data was being collected. Screens can be replayed in real time or at a user-set, accelerated rate. Without the historical replay option, you can replay the most recent four hours; with the option you can replay all the data recorded on the computer. This is valuable in two ways:

- A process record can be created by replaying the original data on a screen with a trend chart based on the start time or a batch tag.
- When troubleshooting a system or process, the engineer or technician can review what was happening when an anomaly occurred.

In version 3 the historical replay option has the added benefit of allowing you to scroll back in a trend chart up to 10 chart-widths of data; without the historical relay option, scrolling is limited to one chart-width.

Do I need the SERIES F4 programmer option?

If you want to program SERIES F4 profiles in SpecView, store profiles as recipes on the computer and download them to the F4, you will want the SERIES F4 programmer option. If you will program profiles via the controller's front panel interface and want to use SpecView primarily to start and stop profiles and graph and log data, then you do not need the SERIES F4 programmer option.

Do I need a special driver for programming profiles with controllers other than the SERIES F4?

The way the SERIES F4 allows access to its 256 ramp soak steps via Modbus® requires a special protocol driver in order to save profiles as recipes in SpecView, but other ramping controllers such as the F4T and EZ-ZONE ST, PM and RM do not require a special driver.

Which special drivers are available from Watlow and which only from SpecView Corp.?

A wide variety of drivers for many different types of instruments are included at no extra charge with SpecView. Watlow offers optional Watlow F4 and Allen-Bradley® DF1 drivers for purchase. SpecView Corp. offers Honeywell® HC900 / UMC800, Eurotherm® PC3000, Mitsubishi® A/Q Series, Marathon Monitors, Yokogawa® CX2000 Recorder and FA/M3 PLC drivers for purchase.

What is the mini option? What is meant by, "limited to two instrument views"?

The mini option supports projects with a maximum of two instruments. Because EZ-ZONE PM Express controllers and limits are supported by one instrument each, the mini version can be used to communicate with a system that has one or two EZ-ZONE PM Express controllers or one EZ-ZONE Express controller and one limit, but no more. Because an EZ-ZONE RM controller is typically supported by at least three instruments, the mini version is not well suited for applications with that controller. See the *Using Watlow Products with SpecView Manual Addendum* for the details of which instruments support which controller options.

Why should I choose the strategy controller option?

Use strategy controller to automate work for users. This feature allows you to configure SpecView to monitor for events, such as specific parameter values, and respond automatically with actions, such as printing the screen, starting data logging or downloading a recipe. Events can also be time or calendar based. Without purchasing the strategy controller option you can still program actions for up to two events.

How might I use the DDE option?

DDE or Dynamic Data Exchange is a standard for communications between Windows® programs. It can be used to get or set variables in SpecView with another program such as Microsoft® Excel®. Implementing a DDE connection requires software programming expertise. For example, to get variable values from SpecView into an Excel® spreadsheet requires a working knowledge of Visual Basic for Applications programming. This option has most frequently been used to integrate customer written applications with SpecView. However, ActiveX® has for the most part supplanted DDE. If you want to integrate with an application that supports DDE, you will want the DDE option, but consider ActiveX®.

How might I use the OPC® client option?

The OPC® client option allows SpecView to connect to a third-party, local OPC server, such as Kepware®, and present data from it as one or more instruments with associated variables. Currently this functionality is limited to OPC servers running on the same computer as SpecView. This can be used to interface data from devices not directly supported by SpecView.

What is the ActiveX® container option?

This option allows you to add ActiveX® controls to SpecView screens. ActiveX® controls are available from companies such as Software Toolbox™ Inc. (www.softwaretoolbox.com) or software developers may write their own. ActiveX® controls may be only graphical with no interactive or functional properties such as a depiction of a pipe, they may be both graphical and interactive such as a graphic that shows the state of a valve based on a variable in SpecView, or ActiveX® controls may be purely functional, such as a calculation outputting a result to a SpecView variable. Using purely graphical ActiveX® elements with no interactivity does not require the ActiveX® option. Incorporating ActiveX® controls that interact with SpecView variables, requires the ActiveX® container option.

How might I use the remote user option?

This option allows a user running SpecView on a “remote” computer to connect to SpecView running on a computer that is “local” to and communicating with controllers. The number of simultaneous remote connections is limited by the local key; remote computers do not need SpecView keys. Remote users can be allowed read-only access or full access to screens and controller settings. The connection can be over a local area network, a wide area network, the Internet or a modem. This option is useful for supervising or servicing equipment from a remote location or when a large piece of equipment requires more than one user interface.

Which products communicate with SpecView using the Allen-Bradley® protocol option?

The Allen-Bradley® option supports the DF1 protocol which is either standard or an option on Allen-Bradley® PLCs such as PLC5, SLC500, ControlLogix®, MicroLogix and CompactLogix.

What happens if someone accidentally orders an upgrade for an option that is already present?

Watlow may not catch the error. However, prior to ordering an upgrade users must open a screen that lists all the options they already have. They should be careful to order only additional options. If in doubt, contact Watlow technical support for help determining which options are present.