

Press release from the German Heat Pump Association (BWP)

The 2026 BWP press tour heads to Upper Franconia's 'Heat Pump Valley'

Bamberg/Berlin, 8 May 2026. The BWP press tour 2026 to Upper Franconia on the 6th and 7th May demonstrated just how widely heat pumps are already being used today. Whilst in Berlin there is debate over the draft bill for the new Building Modernisation Act, "GModG (Gebäudemodernisierungsgesetz)", more than 2 million heat pumps are already in operation across Germany, not only in small residential properties but also in apartment blocks, neighbourhoods and commercial buildings. This year's spring press tour organised by the BWP provided an insight into a wide range of applications in Northern Bavaria that demonstrate the heat transition in practice.

The event kicked off with a factory tour at **Glen Dimplex** in Kulmbach. At its Upper Franconian site, the company develops and manufactures heat pumps 'Made in Bavaria'. Just under 700 employees work there. Production includes heat pumps with outputs of up to 180 kW and chillers with cooling capacities of up to 226 kW. Around 50,000 units leave the production halls every year. The press group gained insights into production, processes and local value creation at the site.

The group then proceeded to the **Kulmbach District office**. The administrative building, which dates from the 1960s, has undergone extensive refurbishment over the years, including energy-efficient façade renovation, new windows and a photovoltaic system. The previous natural gas heating system has now been replaced by three air-to-water heat pumps, which are installed directly in front of the office building and are supported by solar power from the roof. Regional Administrator Jonas Gleich (CSU), who has been in office since 1 May, welcomed the attendees in person and, together with the technical team, explained the technological transition.

The third stop of the tour was the **Emons logistics centre in Thurnau**. Situated on a site of around 3.5 hectares, the facility comprises 16,000 square metres of logistics space and a 700-square-metre office wing, both of which are heated and cooled using a cascade system of four air-to-water heat pumps. The installation demonstrates that heat pumps can reliably provide both heating in winter and cooling in summer, even in large commercial and logistics properties. Fittingly, the warehouse also stores numerous heat pumps manufactured by ait Deutschland (alpha innotec). Andreas Wimmer from ait explained the technology behind the facility together with Matthias Barth from the specialist HVAC contractor Schwender. Founded in 1701, the long-established company was responsible for installing the heat pumps for the logistics centre. Mr Schwender welcomed the journalists and provided interesting insights into the company's work.

At the end of the first day, the group visited the **"Joseph" regional development project in Bayreuth**. A modern residential quarter with around 500 housing units is currently being built on the site. The heating supply is based on a sustainable energy concept featuring 170 borehole heat exchangers, each reaching depths of up to 100 metres. By harnessing geothermal energy, the neighbourhood is expected to be heated and cooled efficiently in the future. On the construction site, journalists had the opportunity to speak with the participating companies — Weishaupt, BauGrund Süd and Getec — about the planning, implementation and technical requirements of the project.

The second day focused on Bamberg. The first stop was the **Lagarde 1 start-up centre**, where an innovative heating and cooling energy system has been implemented. At the heart of the system is

an underground ice thermal energy storage unit measuring four metres in height, 13 metres in width and with a capacity of 440,000 litres. With a heating load of 205 kW and a cooling load of 150 kW, the system meets the building's energy requirements. The storage unit is regenerated via 67 solar air collectors installed on the flat roof, which transfer ambient heat into the ice storage system. In addition to the technical plant room, the press group was also able to visit the solar air collectors on the roof and the ice storage unit itself.

The press tour concluded at the **Lagarde Campus Bamberg** with the 'Wärme 4.0' cluster meeting organised by Bayern Innovativ. The focus was on innovative heating network solutions, local heating networks, and future-oriented neighbourhood concepts ("Zukunftsquartier"). These themes came together during the tour of the *Zukunftsquartier 4.0* district on the Lagarde Campus, where participants gained insights into technologies such as near-surface geothermal energy, wastewater heat recovery, seasonal thermal storage, and a low-temperature heat network — all brought together as part of an integrated energy supply concept.

The projects visited demonstrate how the heat transition can work in practice through regional, technologically diverse and scalable solutions, with a particular focus on the integration of a wide range of heat sources for use in large commercial buildings and mixed-use neighbourhoods.

For further information, visit <https://www.waermepumpe.de/presse/pressemittelungen/> .
<https://www.waermepumpe.de/presse/pressefahrten/uebersicht/>.

For anyone who was unable to attend, further press material is available on request.

About the German Heat Pump Association (BWP)

The German Heat Pump Association - Bundesverband Wärmepumpe (BWP) e. V. is an industry association based in Berlin that covers the entire value chain surrounding heat pumps. The BWP brings together over 1,350 companies from the heating industry, tradesmen, planning and architectural firms, drilling companies and energy suppliers, all of whom are committed to promoting the increased use of efficient heat pumps.

The German heat pump industry employs around 100,000 people and generates an annual turnover of around 3.5 billion euros. There are currently just under two million heat pumps in use in Germany. Around 95 per cent of the systems installed here are manufactured by BWP member companies.

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