

SUCCESS STORY

Financial Benefits of Solar Power Achieved at Sand Creek Community



PROPERTY INFO

Sand Creek Apartments
Owned by Self-Help Enterprises

CARPORTS INCLUDED

Yes

LOCATION

Orosi, Calif., in the Central Valley

UTILITY TERRITORY

PG&E

YEAR BUILT

Opened in 2006

UNITS

60

RESIDENT PROFILE

Multigenerational

JOB TRAINEES

Two including one tenant

INCENTIVE

\$267,690

ESTIMATED SAVINGS PER UNIT

\$50 per month

SYSTEM SIZE

128-kW CEC-AC

Background

A key aspect of the SOMAH Program is addressing the disproportionate energy burden that Californians living in low-income and environmental justice communities face. For the multigenerational families of Sand Creek Apartments, a 60-unit multifamily affordable housing community located in Orosi, Calif., this has often resulted in the increasing financial strain of more income going to energy bills.

To counteract this issue, [Self-Help Enterprises \(SHE\)](#) and Sunrun partnered in April 2020 to install solar energy at the Sand Creek community via the SOMAH Program. The intention was to deliver long-term sustainable energy solutions and economic relief to residents.



"The solar comes in and it provides direct benefits to residents, by helping to lower energy costs and at the same time brings buy-in to energy conservation."

– Patrick Isherwood, Asset Management Program Director, Self-Help Enterprises



SOMAH Experience

During the months prior to the installation, the Sand Creek community prepared for the solar energy system through tenant education focusing on the benefits of solar, energy conservation tips, the installation process and paid job training opportunities.

While opportunities are limited, all residents of a participating SOMAH property are automatically eligible to take part in SOMAH's [paid job training program](#) including being a part of the solar installation where they live. This reflects SOMAH's commitment to workforce development and further emphasizes the importance of empowering communities to have a proactive role in transforming their environment. Two job trainees assisted in the Sand Creek installation, including one resident and a trainee from a local job training organization in the Central Valley.

Conclusion

In August 2021, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held celebrating the successful installation and permission to operate the 128-kW CEC-AC solar energy system. For residents, this will provide an estimated savings of \$50 per month on their energy bills. SOMAH's third-party evaluator estimates that bill credits from SOMAH's solar energy installations typically offset residents' utility bills up to 90%.

Lesly Bucio, a resident of Sand Creek reflects that although she initially was unsure of what having solar would mean for her and her family, she is now very excited to have it.

"I am a single mother with two children. I work in a warehouse packing peaches seasonally. I feel a lot better having solar and knowing the electric bill will be affordable."

– Lesly Bucio, Sand Creek resident

In addition to improving financial security for families, the environmental benefits are also something residents value about having solar panels.

"My family and I think it's great to go green, help the environment, and get the savings," said Christian Vasquez, who has been living at Sand Creek for about five years with his family.





Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing

To learn more about SOMAH and solar for
your multifamily affordable housing, visit
CalSOMAH.org

858-244-1177 ext. 5
contact@CalSOMAH.org



© 2022 Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program (SOMAH)

Disclaimer: The Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program (SOMAH)[®] makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information. However, the content is presented "as is" without warranty of any kind. Reference to any specific commercial product, process, or service does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the SOMAH Program.