

Newsletter article



Use image newsletter_600x200.png

Monumental solar equity program provides benefits of renewable energy to affordable housing residents

California is leading the way in providing solar energy access to communities that need it the most. The [Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing](https://www.calsomah.org/) (SOMAH) Program is a ground-breaking solar equity program designed to bring clean, renewable energy to hundreds of thousands of residents in environmental justice and affordable housing communities.

SOMAH reduces air pollution and carbon emissions in communities that are often the most impacted by the harmful effects of fossil fuel energy use, while providing direct financial benefits to tenants, who often pay a significant portion of their income toward utility bills. Per program rules, increased rent, adjustments to utility allowances and other cost-recapture mechanisms as a result of the solar installation are not permitted – and most of the energy produced by the solar panels must go to tenants.

One of the program's unique features is a workforce training requirement that provides contractors with local job trainees to assist with responsibilities such as system design, project management and installations. The requirement aims to boost local economies and provide long-term, meaningful jobs in the solar industry to community members.

As of fall 2022, the program has paid and reserved \$132 million in funding for over 63 megawatts of solar power generating capacity.

With about 3,500 multifamily affordable housing properties statewide eligible for the program, SOMAH is set to have long-lasting impacts throughout California by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing workforce development opportunities and lowering the overall cost of solar.

For more information, visit [CalSOMAH.org](https://www.calsomah.org/).