

## Multifamily Affordable Solar Housing Solar Energy Success Story



### Simi Valley Seniors Lower Electricity Bills Thanks to Solar Energy

Phil McCarthy uses the savings to help maintain a website about jazz. Rita Reinhard treats herself to manicures. And Lupe Delgado covers the costs of extra bills she needs to pay.

These seniors end each month with a little extra money thanks to savings from the 43.2-kilowatt (kW) solar generating system installed in spring 2010 at the Peppertree Court apartments, a 38-unit senior housing complex in Simi Valley. The cost of the project was offset by approximately \$160,000 in rebates

from Southern California Edison (SCE) through the Multifamily Affordable Solar Housing (MASH) program, which provides rebates for the installation of solar generating systems on qualifying affordable housing facilities.

At Peppertree Court, the solar generating system provides about 80 percent of

its electricity to tenants, with the remaining 20 percent to common areas. Overall, it offsets about 40 percent of the complex' total electricity usage.

#### Helping Residents and the Planet

"The MASH program made this [solar project] an absolute 'yes,'" said building owner Greti Croft. As a private owner, she used a line of credit on her own home — which also includes a solar generating system — to help finance the up-front cost of the system at Peppertree Court. She noted that the rebate, combined with the 30 percent Federal Investment Tax Credit (U.S. Federal ITC) available on the net cost of the system after the rebate, ultimately made the final cost "really kind of a wash."

But for Croft, that wasn't the motivation. "Whatever I do, I want to leave it a little better than I found it. The point is to make a difference," she said. With solar, "you help seniors and you help the planet. You can't lose."



**Location:** Peppertree Court — Simi Valley, CA

**Industry:** Multifamily Housing

**System size:** 43.2 kW

**Results:** Reduces residents' electricity bills and offsets the overall complex' electricity usage by about 40 percent, helping to reduce costs and decrease its carbon footprint

#### Feeling Grateful for Monthly Bill Savings

The residents of Peppertree Court greatly appreciate the opportunity to live in a building where solar generation lowers their monthly costs.

For McCarthy, his summer electricity bills used to run from \$45 to \$50 a month, while now they are less than \$20. "When we went solar I was thrilled," he said. "I've always been an advocate for solar power, and now I have evidence it's the way to go."

"We're able to help ourselves and our community. I'm really grateful," added Reinhard, whose monthly summer bills also have dropped to under \$20, from their previous amount of \$30 to \$35. "It helps me having that little extra money each month."

As for the aesthetics of the solar panels? "They're not easy to see," Reinhard said, "but on the third floor they look really cool."

Delgado also likes the look of the building, not to mention the new bottom line on her electric bill. "Before

solar my bill was pretty high — \$30, \$40 or \$50 a month,” she said. “After solar it’s looking much better — about \$5. You can’t go wrong with that, and it helps with other bills I need to pay.”



**“Our tenants are pretty much on a fixed income that gets quite stretched. Solar was a way to give to them and make a difference in their income. It’s been a win-win economically, for the people and for the planet.”**

Peppertree Court owner Greti Croft, on the Multifamily Affordable Solar Housing (MASH) program

For owner Croft, who worries about residents who might not be able to afford basic necessities like food or medicine, that’s what matters. “Our tenants are pretty much on a fixed income that gets quite stretched,” she said. “Solar was a way to give to them and make a difference in their income.”

She concluded, “I believe we’re on this Earth to make a difference. It’s been a win-win economically, for the people and for the planet.”

### The MASH Program Helps Drive Cost Savings with Solar Power

**Go Solar California!** Energy customers like you are part of California’s campaign to create 3,000 megawatts of renewable solar-produced electricity — the equivalent to taking six natural gas-fired power plants offline — and moving the state toward a cleaner energy future.

The MASH program is part of the California Solar Initiative program and the **Go Solar California** campaign, and provides rebates for the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on multifamily affordable housing complexes to offset electricity loads and provide economic benefits for housing property owners, managers and building tenants.



Rita Reinhard

To qualify for a MASH program rebate, buildings must be located in SCE’s service territory, have an occupancy permit and meet the definition of low-income residential housing as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 2852. The program provides fixed, up-front, capacity-based incentives using Expected Performance-Based Buydown methodology, and can offset a significant portion of the up-front project cost.

With so much solar coming online, system costs are competitive and the systems themselves have become a reliable investment. By choosing to “go solar,” multifamily affordable housing property owners and managers can offset common area and/or tenant load while demonstrating a genuine commitment to “greening” both their facility and their bottom line.



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### Start Saving Now

**California Solar Initiative**  
[www.sce.com/gosolar](http://www.sce.com/gosolar)  
[www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov](http://www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov)

**General Questions**  
**(800) 799-4177**

**Program Administration**  
**(866) 584-7436**

### Earn Even More Savings with Other SCE Programs

- **SCE’s Multifamily Energy Efficiency Rebate program** provides rebates to property owners or managers of complexes with two or more units that purchase eligible products. Call **(800) 736-4777** for a complete list of eligible products and visit [www.sce.com/multifamily](http://www.sce.com/multifamily) to view a complete list of authorized contractors.
- To find out how to make your facility more energy efficient, take **free SCE classes** in lighting, HVAC, energy management and more at an Edison Energy Education Center. Call **(800) 336-2822 (Irwindale)** or **(800) 772-4822 (Tulare)**, and visit [www.sce.com/energycenters](http://www.sce.com/energycenters) for details.

### For Residents

- The **California Alternate Rate for Energy (CARE) program** offers a discount of 20 percent or more on your monthly electric bill if you qualify based on income. If the CARE program is not right for your family, you may qualify for the **Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) program**. This plan offers a discounted rate on your monthly energy bill for families of three or more persons who fall within specific income guidelines and exceed their baseline usage by 30 percent or more. For income requirements and information about how to enroll, call **(800) 447-6620** or visit [www.sce.com/care](http://www.sce.com/care).

SCE offers a range of solutions, such as cash incentives, energy surveys and payment options to help you better manage your electricity costs.

### For More Information

[www.sce.com](http://www.sce.com)  
**(800) 990-7788**

