



FREEHOTWATER

SOLAR THERMAL SOLUTIONS™

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Project: Zone Verde Apartments, Tucson, AZ, a 138 Unit Apartment Complex

Number of Collectors: 48 (8000 Series)

Average monthly savings with solar thermal: \$1,200/month

SunRenu installs both solar PV and solar thermal, and when Zone Verde managers initially considered solar, their initial thought was to utilize solar PV panels for offsetting the apartment complex's electricity costs. But when they heard about SunRenu's option for solar water heating, they changed their solar plans to installing a solar thermal system.

While having hot water included in a leasing agreement is an added value for renters, carrying the water-heating costs for a 138-unit apartment complex can be substantial. In the case of Zone Verde Apartments, an average of \$1,800 per month, or over \$21,000 annually went to towards water heating, reducing the building's overall profitability.

Through the installation of 48 solar collectors and a 3,500-gallon solar thermal storage tank, Zone Verde is expected to save 67% on its annual water heating costs, or an average of \$1,200 per month or more.



SunRenu chose Free Hot Water's made-in-USA SRCC-rated 8000 series solar collectors, which will produce over 683,000,000 BTUs per year for Zone Verde.

Typically, the upfront costs of commercial solar thermal projects are reduced through a solar lease or solar power purchase agreement (PPA). However, in the case of Zone Verde, the owners self-financed. As a result, they directly captured all of the available solar thermal incentives.

These included:

- \$62,500 TEP Utility Rebate
- \$53,850 Federal 1603 Grant in lieu of the 30% Federal Investment Tax Credit
- \$18,000 Arizona State Tax Credit
- Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System (MACRS), a tax incentive that will also reduce tax-deductible expense of the solar system.

In addition to the reduced operating expenses, Zone Verde asset managers say they're attracting and retaining more renters through installing the system through its pro-active environmental efforts.

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“Zona Verde actually means ‘green zone,’ so installing the solar thermal system really meshed with what we’re trying to do at the property,” said Kuzi Mutsiwegota, Zona Verde’s Asset Manager. “We have a resident base that consists of responsible, serious college students, and over the years, we’ve been thrilled to see a substantial increase in our residents wanting to be a part of the ‘going green’ movement.”

As with all large commercial projects, Zona Verde did have its challenges. John and his team had to install the system on a multi-level flat foam roof. As a result, SunRenu had to build custom racking to raise and lower the collectors where needed, so that the system has a natural flow. The installers hand cut and fastened together each piece of racking, creating a structure that allowed the water to have natural movement toward the 3,500 gallon storage tank with built-in heat exchangers.

We asked John why he selected Free Hot Water for his solar collectors and other equipment, and he gave us a nice compliment. He said, “Dealing with experienced individuals regarding solar thermal is hard to come by these days. Some plumbing distributors don’t have the experience with solar thermal, so we know we can count on Free Hot Water for their support, as well as the quality of their products.”

Thanks, John! We’re always glad to help.

So if you’re an Arizona commercial business that uses a lot of hot water, we hope you’ll consider utilizing these rebates and benefit from solar thermal. Contact us for more information.