



Tomorrow's Energy Today

for Cities and Counties

Public Utilities Supply Solar Energy to Eager Customers

Photovoltaic power—it's an alternative source of energy that can help utilities earn goodwill from their customers for being innovative, saving money, and reducing harmful emissions.

Customers of local, publicly owned electric utilities are more sophisticated today than ever before. They demand the best—power that's clean, economical, and reliable. You can satisfy your customers, achieve portfolio diversity, and get help with demand-side management. How? With photovoltaic power—the direct conversion of sunlight to electricity (see p. 5).

Planners at municipal utilities are discovering the advantages that photovoltaic (PV) power offers. In addition to the thousands of private, federal,

state, and commercial PV systems installed during the last 20 years, more than 65 cities in 24 states also have installed such systems.

PV power is cost effective in selected utility applications today, and those applications are expanding every year. PV can be useful in applications ranging from low-power uses to decentralized applications to large, central stations. Public utilities in Austin and Sacramento are among those successfully using PV power for all three types of applications. Their stories follow.

MASTER

Photovoltaics (PV) works for all of us. These senior residents of Austin's ECHO Village benefit from reduced utility bills because of a rooftop PV system installed on their homes.

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Austin Electric's PV Applications

City of Austin Electric Utility, owned by the City of Austin, Texas, serves a metro area of about 421 square miles (1090 square kilometers). The utility uses PV power for numerous applications, including

PV300—This 300-kW, grid-connected, flat-plate tracking system was installed in 1986 as a demonstration of bulk power production from a PV power plant in a centralized location.

Youth Hostel—This 2.3-kW, grid-connected, flat-plate system was installed in 1990 on the roof of a



Kevin Virobik-Adams, Progressive Photo 7/1731