


Davis communities make being green a way of life

CO₂OL

places to live in Davis




Did you know?
Students learn about recycling in elementary school through R.I.S.E., Recycling is Simply Elementary.

Village Homes

Village Homes' youngest residents cross a path near the community garden.



Village Homes is a 70-acre subdivision located in the west part of Davis, California. Construction on the neighborhood began in the fall of 1975. The completed development includes 225 homes and 20 apartment units.



Did you know?
There are more than 100 miles of bike paths and lanes in Davis.

It was designed to encourage both the development of a sense of community and the conservation of energy and natural resources. All lots are oriented north-south to promote the use of solar panels within the community. The streets are narrower to reduce the amount of pavement and cars on the road, alternating streets with pedestrian and bike paths. The community also features natural drainage with a network of creek beds and pond areas, and edible landscaping.

Muir Commons

Solar panels were installed on the main building of Muir Commons in 2002.




Muir Commons was the first co-housing community newly constructed in the United States and was modeled after communities in Denmark. After several years of planning, ground breaking took place on November 1990 with the residents moving in during the summer of 1991. Most of the homes were constructed as affordable housing. The 3,668-square-foot "Common House" includes a large kitchen and dining area to accommodate group meals. Shared facilities also include a 900-square-foot woodworking and automotive shop, parking areas and bicycle sheds. The community has lawns, gardens and an orchard, and produces its own power through the use of photovoltaic solar panels.

The Domes



Each of the 14 Domes houses two students.

Baggins End, or "the domes" as they are more commonly referred to as, was established in 1972 as a community for students at UC Davis interested in sustainable living. Baggins End, located at the north-west edge of the Davis campus, consists of 14 domes that each house two students. The domes are



Did you know?
The City of Davis has approximately 200 LED traffic signals in use. Compared to conventional bulbs, LEDs use 80% less energy and last six times as long. Before the use of LEDs, all bulbs from traffic signal heads were replaced every 18 months.

and the general reduction of [their] ecological footprint." The domes have an extensive organic garden in which students practice crop rotation and sustainable agriculture, as well as raising chickens.

Interview with a solar panel owner

Jennifer and her husband live on Third Street, and are the proud new owners of solar panels

Q. When did you have the solar panels installed?
A. The end of June. We had a local company do it.



Q. Why did you have them installed?
A. We thought it was the responsible thing to do. We saved for a while, but it seems like there is so much waste produced from other energy sources.

We live in Northern California, we don't have enough energy for the entire state but we do have plenty of sunshine.

Q. How many, and how much did they cost?
A. We have 14 solar panels. They cost us \$24,000, but we got a rebate from PG&E for \$5,700. The more solar panels you install, the higher the rebate.

Q. How much energy do you generate?
A. We generate 15-16 kilowatts per day. That's more than we need, but we figured we're investing in clean, free energy, so why not?

Q. Would you say it's worth it?
A. Yes, absolutely. Someone might not be able to afford 14, but maybe a few. We don't have an electric bill anymore. And for people that think installing solar panels on their roof might detract from their house or property value, ours are on our garage roof; you can't even see them from the front.

Q. Would you recommend the installation of solar panels to others?
A. Yes, my in-laws live in Davis and they are in the process of putting them up now.

Calling all readers!

Have you installed solar panels on your home? Does your neighbor recycle or compost just about everything? Please submit your story about reducing your own carbon footprint, or send us suggestions for other places in Davis that are reducing greenhouse gas emissions. You might be our next featured Davisite on our Web site! Send correspondence to sustainability@cityofdavis.org