

Affordable housing project in Woodland gets LEED Platinum status

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Mutual Housing California

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It's the first project by Mutual Housing California to win the designation, said CEO Rachel Iskow. Called Mutual Housing at Spring Lake, the Woodland development includes 62 apartments and town homes. It is intended as housing for farm laborers and their families.

Typically, Mutual Housing goes for the “Build It Green” certification from the state. But both city officials and one of the project’s lenders wanted to apply for

LEED Platinum status, which comes from the U.S. Green Building Council.

“We’re very excited for the organization, the residents and the town of Woodland,” Iskow said. Spring Lake opened last year.

Among other features, Spring Lake is zero-net energy, which Iskow said is an ongoing goal Mutual Housing California tries to meet with new projects. Because of the relatively high cost of solar panels, she said, her group has to find other ways to meet the net-zero standard.

At Spring Lake, builders worked to make the apartments as “tight” as possible to make it easier to heat and cool. Heating and air-conditioning systems work off a water-based system, and 75 percent of the waste construction was recycled.

Iskow said one new feature in the apartments is energy-usage monitors in every unit. About the size of a thermostat, the monitors are color coded and show in real time whether the energy usage is optimal, or less so. Because they’re easy to use, she said, the monitors could end up being a feature in future Mutual Housing projects as well.