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Highlands housing project scores big in green rating

Sacramento|Yolo Mutual Housing Association scored big in its first attempt at green certification. The Sacramento-based nonprofit's Mutual Housing at the Highlands project scored 121 points, one of the highest ratings that Oakland-based Build It Green has given in the area. The tally is significantly more than the minimum score of 50.

Highlands has 90 apartments – 62 efficiency units, 16 one-bedroom and 12 three-bedrooms, with 66 for the homeless. Mutual Housing chose to go with Build It Green instead of LEED certification because BIG takes into account California standards and only rates single and multifamily homes.

Build It Green has rated 6,540 units since 2007 and 6,695 single-family homes since 2005, BIG project manager Christopher Becker said in a news release.

The apartment complex in North Highlands has ductless heating and evaporative coolers, tank-less water heaters, higher than standard amount of insulation and radiant barriers in the roof.

It also has drought-tolerant landscaping, smart irrigation, low-flow toilets, high-efficiency faucets and shower heads and Energy Star appliances.

Engineered and pre-cut lumber reduced construction waste; cabinets, interior trim and flooring were made from durable, long-lasting material so they won't need to be replaced as often.

Indoor air quality also was a major consideration, so low-formaldehyde insulation and cabinets, as well as high-efficiency kitchen and bathroom fans are used.

Founded in 1988, Sacramento|Yolo Mutual Housing Association develops and operates rental housing for modest-income households. The nonprofit has 2,750 residents.



The Highlands scored big on its first green rating.



The Highlands scored 121 points from Build It Green.