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Sunetric Installs Highest PV System in Hawaii

Sunetric recently installed a 200-kilowatt (kW) photovoltaic (PV) system to energize Kukui Plaza's two 32-story towers in downtown Honolulu.

Sunetric began installation on Aug. 12. According to the firm, the system is expected to produce 397,545 kW hours a year, offsetting about 32.2 percent of electricity in the complex's common areas, which include walkways, elevators, a 2.6 acre park and a 1,811-stall parking garage.

Sunetric says the installation "was a bit trickier than your average project," requiring 47 helicopter lifts to move the panels and other materials from a nearby parking lot up to the roof, about 280 feet off the ground. The firm adds: "Once completed, Kukui Plaza's PV system will be perched at a higher point than any other in the state relative to ground level."

The new system will help to offset Kukui Plaza's ever-rising maintenance fees, a large portion of which is spent on utilities, and will, in turn, benefit the 6,000 people living, working or passing through the complex every day.

"We needed to find a way to offset those rising utility costs, and Sunetric provided an avenue for us," says Henry Urquhart, Kukui Plaza operations manager. "Since 1981 Kukui Plaza has been a self-managed property, and it only makes sense for us to be self-sustaining too."

Sunetric says that Kukui Plaza will be looking at \$22,870 in savings due to the solar power purchase agreement. After 20 years, Kukui Plaza will retain 100 percent of the savings from energy generated from then on.

"What's really significant about this project isn't so much the height of the project," says Alex Tiller, Sunetric's CEO. "It's the complex's decision to opt for a more sustainable, livable future. Honolulu is one of the densest cities in the U.S., and we can only hope more condominium projects in the city will join Kukui Plaza's smart planning."



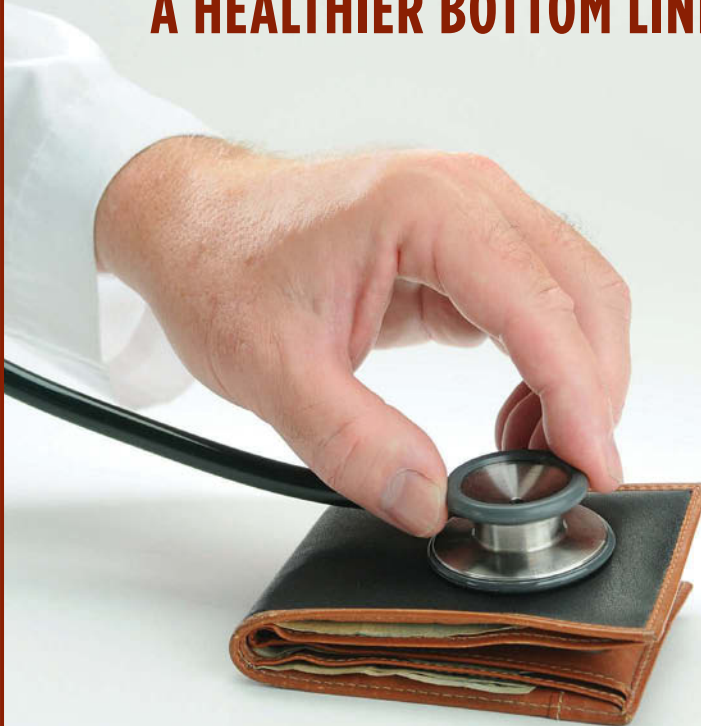
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According to Sunetric, Kukui Plaza's 200-kW system needed 47 helicopter lifts for the rooftop installation, which is 280 feet off the ground.



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