



# Solar thermal power generation makes money

What is solar thermal energy?

Solar thermal energy: What... There are two key methods for harnessing the power of the sun: either by generating electricity directly using solar photovoltaic (PV) panels or generating heat through solar thermal technologies. While the two types of solar energy are similar, they differ in their costs, benefits, and applications.

Can solar thermal power plants provide electricity to 100 million people?

By concentrating solar energy with reflective materials and converting it into electricity, modern solar thermal power plants, if adopted today as an indispensable part of energy generation, may be capable of sourcing electricity to more than 100 million people in the next 20 years [source: Brakmann].

Can solar thermal power be converted to electricity?

Solar thermal power can also be converted to electricity by using the steam generated from the heated water to drive a turbine connected to a generator. However, because generating electricity this way is much more expensive than photovoltaic power plants, there are very few in use today.

How has solar energy changed the world?

In the past decade, the cost of electricity produced by CSP has dropped more than 50 percent thanks to more efficient systems and the wider use of thermal energy storage, which allows solar energy to be dispatchable around the clock and increase the time each day that a solar power plant can generate energy.

What is solar thermal plant?

Solar thermal plant is one of the most interesting applications of solar energy for power generation. The plant is composed mainly of a solar collector field and a power conversion system to convert thermal energy into electricity.

How does a solar thermal power plant work?

The most common type of solar thermal power plants, including those plants in California's Mojave Desert, use a parabolic trough design to collect the sun's radiation. These collectors are known as linear concentrator systems, and the largest are able to generate 80 megawatts of electricity [source: U.S. Department of Energy].

Overview History Low-temperature heating and cooling Heat storage for space heating Medium-temperature collectors High-temperature collectors Heat collection and exchange Heat storage for electric base loads Solar thermal energy (STE) is a form of energy and a technology for harnessing solar energy to generate thermal energy for use in industry, and in the residential and commercial sectors. Solar thermal collectors are classified by the United States Energy Information Administration as low-, medium-, or high-temperature collectors. Low-temperature collectors are generally unglazed and used to heat



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