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Babcock Ranch, located in Punta Gorda, Florida, stands as a shining example of how modern communities can harmonize sustainability with resilience. Established in 2018, this forward-thinking town combines renewable energy, energy-efficient housing, and robust infrastructure to create a model of sustainable living.

At the heart of Babcock Ranch's innovation is its commitment to solar energy. The community is powered by an expansive 880-acre solar field, known as the Babcock Ranch Solar Energy Center. This facility generates enough clean energy not only to meet the community's needs but also to contribute surplus electricity back to the grid.

Additionally, the community features solar trees in Founder's Square. These aesthetically designed structures double as charging stations for electronic devices, emphasizing renewable energy in daily life. This integration of solar technology into everyday amenities reflects the town's forward-thinking approach.

Homes in Babcock Ranch are constructed to meet the Bronze Standard of the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) Certification. This certification ensures that every residence incorporates energy-saving and sustainable features, such as:

These features result in significantly lower utility bills for residents. For instance, Janette Dulaney, a resident, reported her electricity costs were half those of her previous home, despite the new one being twice the size.

In addition to its sustainability initiatives, Babcock Ranch prioritizes resilience against natural disasters, particularly hurricanes. All structures are built to withstand winds of up to 150 mph, a critical feature in hurricane-prone Florida. The community's inland location, about 30 feet above sea level, provides additional protection against storm surges.

These measures were tested during Hurricane Milton in October 2024. While over 3 million Floridians experienced power outages, Babcock Ranch maintained electricity. The town also became a refuge for approximately 2,000 evacuees, further showcasing its reliability during crises.

Beyond its technological advancements, Babcock Ranch fosters a vibrant and environmentally conscious community. The town promotes walkable neighborhoods and reduced vehicle reliance, with many children walking or biking to school. Recreational facilities, local markets, and fitness classes enhance the community spirit.

Residents also enjoy access to nature through activities like canoeing, kayaking, and paddleboarding in the neighborhood's lakes. These amenities not only offer recreation but also encourage a deeper connection with the environment.



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Resident Jason Upperco expressed appreciation for the community's impact, stating, "Living here makes us more aware of how our choices affect the environment. It's fulfilling to be part of something so positive."

Babcock Ranch is more than a residential community; it's an economic engine. The solar energy center provides jobs, and the town's expansion plans are expected to create additional employment opportunities in construction, education, and local businesses.

Under the leadership of Syd Kitson, a former NFL player turned developer, Babcock Ranch continues to grow. Plans include expanding to 19,500 homes by 2035, with housing options ranging from under \$300,000 to over \$4 million. The development will also feature new schools, parks, and commercial spaces.

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