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Midtemperature Solar Systems Test Facility Predictions for Thermal Performance of the SUNTEC Solar Collector With Heat-Formed Glass Reflector Surface

MASTER

Thomas D. Harrison

Prepared by Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87185
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MIDTEMPERATURE SOLAR SYSTEMS TEST FACILITY PREDICTIONS
FOR THERMAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SUNTEC
SOLAR COLLECTOR WITH HEAT-FORMED
GLASS REFLECTOR SURFACE

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ABSTRACT

Thermal performance predictions are presented for the Suntec solar collector, with heat-formed glass reflector surface, for three output temperatures at five cities in the United States.

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MIDTEMPERATURE SOLAR SYSTEMS TEST FACILITY PREDICTIONS
FOR THERMAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SUNTEC
SOLAR COLLECTOR WITH HEAT-FORMED
GLASS REFLECTOR SURFACE

Introduction

Sandia National Laboratories, Albuquerque (SNLA) is currently conducting a program to predict the performance and measure the characteristics of commercially available solar collectors that have the potential for use in industrial process heat and enhanced oil recovery applications. A detailed account of the methods used to make the predictions is given in Reference 1. For the convenience of the reader, some of this information is repeated in this document. This document presents the thermal performance predictions for the Suntec solar line-focusing collector. The program is limited to thermal performance only and does not include consideration of other factors, such as

1. Losses at the ends, at gaps, and from shadowing due to packing,
2. Collector warm-up penalties,
3. Degradation of performance,
4. Cost of the collector,
5. Losses in the energy transport system and system warm-up penalties,
6. Reliability,
7. Cost of installation,
8. Cost of operation and maintenance, and
9. Wind effects.

The program is authorized by the Department of Energy, Division of Solar Thermal Energy Systems, and is partially funded through the Solar Energy Research Institute.

Description of the Collector

A photograph of the Suntec solar collector is shown in Figure 1. The module has the following characteristics.

Reflector configuration	Parabolic trough, 72° rim angle
Reflective surface	Heat-formed glass
Aperture dimensions	2.73 m x 5.94 m (8.96 ft x 19.50 ft)
Aperture area	16.22 m ² (174.58 ft ²)
Support structure	Unfilled aluminum honeycomb covered and sealed
Tracking system	Honeywell Flux Line Sun Tracker
Drive mechanism	Electric
Heat transfer fluid	Therminol-66®
Operating range	100° to 300°C (212° to 572°F)
Manufacturer	Suntec Systems Inc. 2101 Wooddale Drive St. Paul, MN 55110

Results of the Test Program

This collector was tested at the Collector Module Test Facility (CMTF) at SNLA. From the test data, three parameters were defined.

1. Peak efficiency (η_p) -- the efficiency of the collector, when the sun's rays are at normal incidence to the aperture plane (equivalent to solar noon) expressed as a function of $\Delta t/I$. Δt is the temperature difference between the heat transfer fluid outlet temperature and the ambient temperature in degrees Centigrade. I is the irradiance of the sun in watts per square meter.

$$\eta_p = 69.4 - 29.7 \Delta t/I - 67.5 (\Delta t/I)^2 \text{ . (\%)}$$

Peak efficiency is plotted in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Suntec Solar Collector

Figure 2. Peak Efficiency Plot for the Suntec Solar Collector

2. Receiver thermal loss (Q_L) -- the heat lost per unit aperture area expressed as a function of Δt .

$$Q_L = 0.356 + 0.15 \Delta t + 0.949 \times 10^{-3} (\Delta t)^2 \text{ . (W/m}^2\text{)}$$

Heat loss is plotted in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Heat Loss Plot for the Suntec Solar Collector

3. Optical loss coefficient (K_O) -- K_O , in conjunction with the end-loss coefficient, K_E , and the "cosine effect," determine the incident angle modifier, K . Specifically, $K = K_O K_E \cos \theta$. See Reference 1.

The values of K_o as a function of θ are

θ (degrees)	K_o	θ (degrees)	K_o
0	1.00	40	0.97
10	1.00	50	0.95
20	1.00	60	0.86
30	0.99	70	0.67

Prediction of Thermal Performance

A computer program calculates the predicted thermal performance of the collector. The performance parameters defined above are the input data describing the collector, while solar and weather data are provided by TMY data tapes. With this input, the computer program calculates the thermal output of the collector for each month of the TMY in units of kilowatt hours per square meter (kWh/m^2) of collector aperture area. This calculation was made for five locations: Fresno, California; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Fort Worth, Texas; Charleston, South Carolina; and Boston, Massachusetts. Three different collector output temperatures and both E-W and N-S orientations were considered. Figures 4 through 8 are graphical displays of the results of the computer prediction. These figures show the monthly thermal output ($\text{kWh/m}^2 \cdot \text{mo}$) for each location, output temperature, and orientation. The monthly outputs have been summed to give the annual output for each parameter variation, and the results are shown in Table 1. The computer predictions assume 1 square meter of aperture area in the middle of a row of infinite length, with no end or gap losses and no shadowing due to packing.

Figure 4. Thermal Output of the Suntec Solar Collector with E-W and N-S Orientation and Fresno TMY Solar Data

Figure 5. Thermal Output of the Suntec Solar Collector with E-W and N-S Orientation and Albuquerque TMY Solar Data

Figure 6. Thermal Output of the Suntec Solar Collector with E-W and N-S Orientation and Fort Worth TMY Solar Data

Figure 7. Thermal Output of the Suntec Solar Collector with E-W and N-S Orientation and Charleston TMY Solar Data

Figure 8. Thermal Output of the Suntec Solar Collector with E-W and N-S Orientation and Boston TMY Solar Data

Table 1

Predicted Annual Thermal Output ($\text{kWh/m}^2\cdot\text{yr}$)

		Output Temperature					
		100°C		200°C		300°C	
		Orientation		Orientation		Orientation	
	Solar Energy Available	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S	E-W	N-S
Fresno	2260	1085	1278	951	1096	780	874
Albuquerque	2583	1256	1428	1121	1251	947	1032
Fort Worth	1764	864	962	743	800	592	613
Charleston	1358	680	708	555	561	409	400
Boston	1173	548	580	440	450	317	313

Previously Published Predictions

Thomas D. Harrison, Midtemperature Solar Systems Test Facility Predictions for Thermal Performance of the Solar Kinetics T-700 Solar Collector with FEK 224 Reflector Surface, SAND80-1964/1 (Albuquerque: Sandia National Laboratories, November 1980).

Reference

¹T. D. Harrison, Midtemperature Solar Systems Test Facility Program for Predicting Thermal Performance of Line-Focusing, Concentrating Solar Collectors, SAND80-1964 (Albuquerque: Sandia National Laboratories, November 1980).

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