



## Submittal Requirements Bulletin – Solar Photovoltaic Installations 10 kW or Less in One- and Two-Family Dwellings

This information bulletin is published to guide applicants through a streamlined permitting process for solar photovoltaic (PV) projects 10 kW in size or smaller. This bulletin provides information about submittal requirements for plan review, required fees and inspections.

### 1. Solar Photovoltaic Application Approval Requirements

The following permits are required to install a Solar PV system:

A building permit which may be submitted as either items “a” or “b” below.

- a) **Expedited Permits for Simplified Standard Application:** Planning review **is not** required for solar PV installations of this size at the building counter. Plan review will occur once the permit is issued during inspection at the job site. Separate fire Department approval is not required for solar PV installations of this size (all Fire conformance requirements shall apply).
- b) **Comprehensive Standard Application:** Solar applications which do not meet the conditions for “Simplified Standard application” submittal shall be applied for through our standard solar PV application and plan review process, with a minimum five to ten-day plan review period typically. Please find these requirements at: [Solar Photovoltaic Comprehensive Standard Application](#)

### 2. Simplified Standard Application Requirements

- a) Two sets of completed plans and documents shall be submitted to the Building Department for approval and shall include the following:  
Toolkit documents # 2, # 3 and # 5 and all equipment specifications and supporting documentation.
- b) Demonstrate compliance with **Toolkit Document # 2**, "Eligibility Checklist for Expedited Permitting". These criteria can be downloaded at: [Solar Photovoltaic Toolkit # 2](#)
- c) A completed Simplified Standard Application. These application requirements can be downloaded for Central-Inverter or Micro-Inverter Systems using **Toolkit Document # 3** at: [Solar Photovoltaic Toolkit # 3](#)
- d) A plan view showing the roof layout, PV panels and the following fire safety items: approximate location of roof access point, location of code-compliant access pathways, PV system fire classification and the locations of all required labels and markings. Examples of clear path access pathways are available in the State Fire Marshal Solar PV Installation Guide. [CalFire Solar Photovoltaic Guidelines](#)
- e) A completed **Toolkit Document #5** "Structural Criteria", along with required documentation. Structural Criteria can be downloaded at: [Solar Photovoltaic Toolkit # 5 "Structural Criteria"](#)

- f) For non-qualifying systems, provide structural drawings and calculations stamped and signed by a California-licensed Civil or Structural Engineer, along with the following information.
- The type of roof covering and the number of roof coverings installed
  - Type of roof framing, size of members and spacing
  - Weight of panels, support locations and method of attachment
  - Framing plan and details for any work necessary to strengthen the existing roof structure
  - Site-specific structural calculations
  - Provide documentation showing manufacture of the rack system, maximum allowable weight the system can support, attachment method to the roof or ground and product evaluation information or structural design for the rack system

### 3. Permit Application

**Expedited Permits for Simplified Standard Applications:** Photovoltaic permit applications may be applied for directly at our Building Counter or by submitting online by a “Qualified Person”, with pickup at the Building Counter or by return mail.

Photovoltaic permit applications and installations shall be completed by “Qualified Personnel”. The installation of equipment and all associated wiring and interconnections shall be performed only by qualified persons, as defined by the 2016 CEC article 100 and definitions of a “qualified person” CEC 690.4(C) This includes the following personnel as stated by the California State Licensing Board, a General contractor, Electrical contractor and Solar Photovoltaic contractor.

**a) Direct in Person Application Submittal to the Building Counter**

"Simplified Standard Applications" may be submitted to the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department in person at 701 Ocean St., Suite 400, (fourth floor), Santa Cruz CA, 95060 during office hours. Permit applications utilizing “Simplified Standard Applications” may be approved “Over the Counter”.

Permits not approved as “Over the Counter” will be reviewed as a "Comprehensive Standard Application" .

**b) Online Application Submittal**

Permit applications for "**Simplified Standard Applications**" may be submitted online to the County of Santa Cruz Planning Department at [SolarPV@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:SolarPV@santacruzcounty.us) .

Complete applications will be approved within 24 hours of the application submittal date (business days, excluding weekends).

"**Comprehensive Standard Applications**" shall be submitted in person to the Building Counter and will be reviewed in five to ten business days typically.

**c) Online Simplified Standard Applications shall also include the following forms**

County of Santa Cruz Building Permit Application: [Permit Application Form](#)

County of Santa Cruz Owner Agent Form: [Owner Agent Form](#)

**d) Charging by Credit Card**

Use this link to pay online using your credit card: [Credit Card Application Payment](#)

#### 4. Permit Fee = \$276.25

#### 5. Inspections

Once all permits to construct the solar installation have been issued and the system has been installed, it must be inspected before final approval is granted for the solar system. Inspections may be scheduled by using our on-line system electronically at: [Building Inspection Scheduling](#) or by telephone at (831) 454-2077.

Inspection requests shall be scheduled **a minimum of one day in advance** for the next business day. PV final inspections **may not be** scheduled for a Friday. Expedited PV permits **allow for one site inspection**, any plan deficiencies, installation corrections, smoke and carbon monoxide detector omissions or missed inspections shall require a minimum of a **one hour inspection time fee prior to re-inspection**.

Permit holders must be prepared to show conformance with all technical requirements in the field at the time of inspection. The inspector will verify that the installation is in conformance with applicable code requirements and with the approved plans.

#### 6. Inspection Check List

The inspection checklist provides an overview of common points of inspection that the applicant should be prepared to show compliance with and is available on our website at:

[Solar Photovoltaic Toolkit # 6 "Inspection Check List"](#)

If not available, common checks include the following:

1. Number of PV modules and model number match plans and specification sheets.
2. Array conductors and components are installed in a neat and workman-like manner.
3. PV array is properly grounded.
4. Electrical boxes are accessible and connections are suitable for environment.
5. Array is fastened and sealed per attachment detail.
6. Conductor ratings and sizes match plans.
7. Appropriate signs are properly constructed, installed and displayed, including the following.
8. Sign identifying PV power source system attributes at DC disconnects.
9. Sign identifying AC point of connection.
10. Sign identifying switch for alternative power system.
11. Equipment ratings are consistent with application and installed signs on the installation, including the following:
  - a) Inverter has a rating as high as max voltage on PV power source sign.
  - a) DC-side overcurrent circuit protection devices (OCPDs) are DC rated at least as high as max voltage on sign.
  - b) Switches and OCPDs are installed per the manufacturer's specifications.
  - c) Inverter is rated for the site AC voltage supplied and shown on the AC point of connection sign.
  - d) OCPD connected to the AC output of the inverter is rated at least 125% of maximum current on sign and is no larger than the maximum OCPD on the inverter listing label.
  - e) Sum of the main OCPD and the inverter OCPD is rated for not more than 120% of the bus bar rating.
  - f) Rapid shut down equipment is labeled and identified per plan.

#### 7. Departmental Contact Information

For additional information regarding this permit process, please consult our departmental website at

<http://www.sccoplanning.com/>

Building Official - Martin Heaney, Office - (831) 454-31295 or [Martin.Heaney@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Martin.Heaney@santacruzcounty.us)

or contact

Senior Building Inspector- Sean Livingston, Office - (831) 454-3096 or [Sean.Livingston@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Sean.Livingston@santacruzcounty.us)