



Solar PV Residential Requirements for Streamlined Review

Planning and Development
Building & Safety Division

Issue Date: September 30, 2015
Revision Date: August 10, 2018

The City of Berkeley encourages the installation of solar energy systems by offering low permit fees and timely permit review and inspection services. Small solar photovoltaic (PV) systems (10 kW AC or less) on rooftops of single family or duplex homes are eligible for a streamlined permitting process through Ordinance No. 7,415-N.S. which added Chapter 19.14 to the [Berkeley Municipal Code](#), in compliance with California Government Code Section 65850.5 (California Assembly Bill 2188).

This streamlined permitting process allows for the use of standard electrical plans and structural engineering criteria. Permits are processed in 1-3 business days if submitted electronically, or over-the-counter or within 1 business day if brought into the [Permit Service Center](#) (appointments, made by calling 510-981-7502, are strongly recommended). One consolidated inspection will be performed when installation is complete.

Eligibility

Review the [Eligibility Checklist](#) to determine whether the project qualifies for streamlined solar PV permitting. If the project is eligible, follow the steps below. If not, please refer to the [Solar Photovoltaic \(PV\) System Submittal Requirements](#) for a complete description of the information required on the plans for solar PV permitting and submit the application in person at the [Permit Service Center](#).

Submittal Requirements

All plans submitted for solar PV systems must comply with, and reference, the 2016 California Building Standards Code that became effective on January 1, 2017, including the 2016 California Residential Code (CRC) and 2016 California Electric Code (CEC), as appropriate.

NOTE: Effective January 1, 2015, Berkeley homes in [Hillside Fire Zones 2 and 3](#) must have Class A solar PV systems (photovoltaic panels with the rack support system) in compliance with the California State Fire Marshal's [Information Bulletin 14-011](#) and submit certificates indicating compliance.

Whether submitted in person or electronically, plans must be drawn to scale (or at the very minimum are fully dimensioned), readable, and legible. Submittals must include the following (elements can be combined if clarity is maintained):

1. **[Code Compliance Checklist for Solar Photovoltaic \(One- or Two- Family Dwellings\)](#)**

Complete and submit this Checklist detailing the permit submittal and code requirements. Required plans include:

- a. **Schematic Site Plan** – follow directions in the Checklist
- b. **Structural Plan** – follow directions in the Checklist, or in lieu of the Structural Plan described in the Checklist, the [Structural Criteria for Residential Flush-Mounted Solar Arrays](#) worksheet may be used for this streamlined review
- c. **Electrical Plan** – follow directions in the Checklist, or in lieu of the Electrical Plan described in the Checklist, these standard plan worksheets (whichever applies) may be submitted:
 - [Solar PV Standard Plan – Central/String Inverter Systems for One- and Two-Family Dwellings](#)
 - [Solar PV Standard Plan – Microinverter and ACM Systems for One- and Two-Family Dwellings](#)

2. **[Permit Application \(Building, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing\)](#)** (under Applications)

Submittal Options

1. **Electronic Submittal** Use [Permits Online](#) to apply electronically. More information on the use of Permits Online for permit application submittal is available [here](#). Permits submitted electronically will be reviewed and issued in 1-3 days.
2. **In Person** Call 510-981-7502 to make an appointment to submit an application at the [Permit Service Center](#). The Permit Service Center does not accept paper plan submittals; plans and documents should be submitted in PDF format via USB Flash Drive with a maximum attachment size of 100 MB and a 300 dpi minimum. Small residential rooftop solar PV permits are processed over-the-counter or within 1 business day.

Inspection

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 through [Permits Online](#), through the automated phone scheduling system at (844) 216-2170, or by phone at (510) 981-7440 (option 1). Detail on scheduling inspections is available [here](#).