



National Photovoltaic Panel Grid Access Permit

Should a local government webpage provide a set of solar permitting requirements?

Providing a set of requirements for the local solar permitting process (for both residential and commercial solar) on an easy-to-find local government webpage represents a major step toward overcoming informational barriers.

Do solar PV installations need local government approval?

All solar PV installations need the local utility's approval to link into the electricity grid, a process commonly referred to as "interconnection." This interconnection approval must be granted before a solar PV installation is allowed to operate and is completely separate from local government approval for the solar installation.

Do I need a building permit for a solar PV system?

Some electric utilities may require that the solar project be reviewed before the local jurisdiction issues a building permit. Pursuing utility approval early in the permit process enables the solar PV system to become operational as soon as possible.

How can a local government enforcing agency ensure efficient solar permitting?

Effective training is one of the most important steps that local governments and the solar industry can take to ensure efficient permitting. Local enforcing agencies can be organized differently, but all have an established process for receiving, reviewing, and approving permits.

How does a solar permit work?

First, a permit application is submitted for review by a local permitting agency, known as the "enforcing agency." Typically, the contractor installing the solar energy system will submit the permit on behalf of the building owner. Once the permit application is approved, the applicant has permission to build the solar installation.

What are some examples of solar permit requirements?

An example of such requirements is as follows: Solar panels, where visible from the ground, are mounted parallel to the roof surface. The maximum height of panels above the roof is 10 feet. Solar panels do not extend past the roof plane. Another department that may want to review a solar permit request is the fire department.

This tool increases transparency into permitting, inspection, and interconnection process, requirements, and overall adoption cycle times nationwide. It includes median cycle times for over 1,500 jurisdictions with at least 10 installs in the ...



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