LICENSES + INSPECTIONS
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Expedited Solar Permitting Process

Purpose This process overview outlines the steps to follow to receive an expedited permit for a solar installation from the City of Philadelphia's Department of Licenses & Inspection (L&I). Contact information is also provided for questions.

Permit Processes There are two tracks that the permit process could follow: **expedited process** (electrical permit only if project meets requirements below), or a **standard permit process.**

PROJECT REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST FOR EXPEDITED SOLAR PERMITTING

Conditions

- ☐ Installation must fully comply with the requirements of the 2009 IRC, 2009 IBC, and the NEC 2008. As of Oct. 1, 2018, Philadelphia will adopt the 2015 IRC, 2018 IBC, and the 2017 NEC (2014 NEC for one- and two- family dwellings and multiple single family dwellings not more than three stories above grade plane in height). A six month grace period will be offered—by Apr. 1, 2019, installations must comply with these updated codes.
- ☐ Systems are limited to 10 kW or less in size.
- ☐ Installation must be on the roof of a one- or two-family dwelling.
- ☐ An Interconnection Application/Agreement – Part 1 (Level 1) has been submitted to PECO for their approval.

Electrical Requirements

- ☐ PV System Components, such as Modules, Strings, Arrays, Combiners, and Inverters must be listed for Solar PV application per NEC 690.4(D).
- ☐ All PV System components shall be properly grounded and bonded.
- ☐ An AC disconnect switch as required by PECO shall be located on the exterior of the building.

Installation Limitations and Requirements

- ☐ Installation shall not commence until Contractor has obtained Level 1 approval from PECO.
- ☐ Installation shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ☐ The Contractor confirms that the existing roof structure will effectively accept the PV Module (Panel) mounting hardware, safely support the combined weight of the PV Modules and future snow loads, and safely withstand wind uplift loads.
- ☐ Equipment shall impose no more than a 45 pounds per square foot (psf) point load in any location.
- ☐ Equipment shall weigh less than 5 psf.
- ☐ The height of the system shall be less than 18 inches above the adjacent roof.
- ☐ Installation shall include a pre-engineered ballasted or mounting structure with all attachments both designed for a wind load of 90 miles per hour (mph).
- ☐ For non-metal sloped roofs, roof mounts with integrated flashing shall be used for mounting the PV Modules to the roof structural members. For sloped metal roofs, penetrating roof mounts (with EPDM rubber gasket seals, or equivalent), and/or non-penetrating clamps shall be used.
- ☐ Ballasted systems can be used for mounting PV Modules to flat roofs.
- ☐ A three (3) foot clearance (minimum of one side) must be provided on roof for equipment maintenance.

EXPEDITED SOLAR PERMIT PROCESS (ELECTRICAL PERMIT ONLY)

If ALL requirements above are met, Contractor submits documentation to L&I (see other side of this sheet for details).

***Be sure to note compliance with the expedited solar permit standard in the "Brief Description of Work" field on the electrical permit application.*

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Contractor pays permit fee.

Electrical permit fees are $25 per $1,000 of project labor and equipment costs. Array and inverter costs are not included in the fee calculation.

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Contractor receives electrical permit.

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Installation can commence AFTER receiving any other permits required by L&I and PECO interconnection approval.

Note: Processing takes 5 business days or less.

Additional fee information:
https://business.phila.gov/electrical-permit/

STANDARD PERMIT PROCESS

If any requirements above for expedited permitting are not met, the standard process must be followed which includes applications for electrical and building permits. ***Tip:*** *If using the standard review process, apply for building and electrical permits at the same time.* See the **Standard Solar Permit Process Overview** for more information.

ELECTRICAL PERMIT APPLICATION SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Complete electrical permit application with tax clearance form and a current, valid certificate of insurance.
  - ⇒ Electrical permit application **and requirements** are available at: https://business.phila.gov/electrical-permit/.
  - ⇒ Only Registered Electrical Contractors may obtain an electrical permit with the City of Philadelphia: https://business.phila.gov/electrical-contractor-license/.
  - ⇒ Contractors who perform at least $5,000 worth of home improvements per year must also register with the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office: www.attorneygeneral.gov/Registrations/Home_Improvement_Contractor_Registration/.
- ☐ Include a copy of the Interconnection Application/Agreement Part 1 (Level 1) that has been submitted to PECO and signed by the applicant.
- ☐ Signed solar PV system permit standard.
- ☐ Include three (3) sets of the following information:
  - ☐ Black & white single line diagrams of the installation including panel board and disconnect switch labeling details (must be on minimum size 11" x 17" paper). Pages larger than 8.5" x 11" will be charged a $4/page scanning fee; **only** plan documents including single line diagrams require minimum size 11" x 17" paper.
  - ☐ Equipment manufacturer specification sheets for all equipment.

SUBMITTING PERMIT APPLICATIONS

- Applications for electrical permits must be submitted to the Department of L&I's Permit Services Unit in the Concourse of the Municipal Services Building, 1401 J.F.K. Boulevard.
- Contractors may submit up to three (3) applications at a time. If a contractor has more than 3 applications to submit, contractor must go to the end of the line after each set of 3 applications has been submitted.

TIPS

- Avoid extra fees by following these guidelines closely. There is an extra $100 review fee for each resubmission starting with the third submission of an application.
- Solar PV systems installed on the roof of a one- or two-family dwelling do not require a zoning permit.

PROJECTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR EXPEDITED SOLAR PERMIT STANDARD

- Installations on roof systems comprised of engineered trusses. *Exception: A letter shall be provided from an engineer stating that they inspected the roof framing, evaluated the proposed solar panel system and determined that the roof framing system can withstand additional loads applied by the solar PV system.*
- Installations on a sloped roof with more than one layer of shingles in place.
- Installations on property designated historical by the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Click on the adjacent icons to access the Guidebook for Solar PV Projects in Philadelphia and the Department of L&I Permit Standard for Expedited Solar PV System Installations.
- Department of Licenses and Inspection website: www.phila.gov/li