

GUIDELINE**RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) PERMITS - 2010 CBC**

The County issues permits over-the-counter for simple residential rooftop PV systems as described below. Other PV systems may require plan review.

AN OVER-THE-COUNTER ROOFTOP PV PERMIT

A qualified contractor (CA licensed class B, C10 or C46) can obtain an over-the-counter PV Permit for a simple residential rooftop system on a single-family lot when the project meets the following criteria:

1. The maximum installed PV weight is 5 lbs/ft² and a maximum of 40 lbs at any single support point.
2. The existing roof structure will adequately support the PV system.
3. The maximum installed PV height is 18” above the roof surface at any point.
4. There will be no battery backup system as part of the PV system.
5. Layout of the PV system meets the California State Fire Marshal Guidelines for Fire Department Roof Access requirements:
 - a. Panels shall not be installed closer than 3 ft from ridges for Fire Dept smoke ventilation operation.
 - b. For roofs sloped greater than 2:12 and installed with panels –
 - i. Hip Roof – provide a 3 ft access pathway from eave to ridge.
 - ii. Single Ridge Roof – provide TWO 3 ft access pathways from eave to ridge.
 - iii. Hips & Valleys Roof – provide 18” clear on each side of hips or valley where panels are on both sides.
6. Plans and specifications must be prepared by a California licensed architect, engineer, or qualified contractor and shall be readily

available at permit issuance and onsite during the inspection.

7. The contractor has verified if upgrade of the existing service panel will be part of the permit.

PLANNING/ZONING REVIEW

Zoning/Planning review is NOT required for residential roof-top PV systems (California Gov. Code, Section 65850.5).

PV PERMIT APPLICATION

1. Alameda County Building Permit Application is available at:
http://acgov.org/pwa/documents/Permit_Application_Form.pdf.
2. The Building Department will accept payment via cash, check, money order, or credit card.
3. No appointment is required during normal permit processing hours.

OVER-THE-COUNTER PV PERMIT FEES

Fees for an over-the-counter permit for a single PV system (35 kW or less) can be estimated as:

- Inspection Fee: \$280
- Permit Processing Fee: \$30
- Business Lic Fee: 0.125% of Project Valuation.
- State SMIP Fee: 0.01% of Project Valuation.
- Misc Fees: \$5.60

Note: Permit Center staff will assist you in calculating accurate permit fees.

INSPECTIONS

After obtaining the over-the-counter PV permit from the County Building Department, an inspection can be scheduled through the following automated systems:

- Online Inspection Request at:
<http://pwainsp.acgov.org/GetWeb/main.html>, or
- A 24-hour Inspection Request Phone Line at 510-670-5434.

Visit the following link for detailed instructions for inspection requests at:

<http://acgov.org/pwa/about/construction/building/instructions.htm>.

A typical rooftop PV system may include the following inspections:

- Site Investigation (as necessary) – Code 100
- Rough Electrical (Required) – Code 307
- Final Electrical (Required) – Code 605
- Final Building (Required) – Code 607

After passing the County’s final inspection, the permit holder may need to contact PG&E for approval prior to activating the system.

PV PROJECTS REQUIRING PLAN REVIEW

When projects do not meet the over-the-counter PV permit criteria, a plan review process may be necessary. Some examples are non-residential PV systems, ground mounted PV systems, battery backup systems, non-listed electrical systems, etc. For these PV systems, plans and documents must be submitted with the plan review fee according to the Alameda County Building Division services fee schedule.

QUALITY OF PLANS & SPECIFICATIONS

- Plans shall be fully dimensioned and shall show, in detail, how the proposed work will conform to the requirements of the Building and Electrical Codes as well as all other applicable laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations.
- Plans must be prepared by a licensed architect, engineer, or qualified contractor.
- Plans shall contain the job address, the name and address of the owner of the property and the name, address, and signature of the person who has prepared the plans.
- When plan review is required, plans shall include the location of easements, driveways, power poles and lines, waterways, septic and

drainage fields, storm drains, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, fire hydrants, utility services and lines.

- When plan review is required, provide structural calculations to demonstrate the PV system is in compliance with structural provisions of the building code. The structural calculations shall address both vertical and lateral forces, and shall be wet stamped and signed by a licensed engineer or architect registered in the State of California.

LOCATION & HOURS 510-670-5440

Alameda County Public Works Building
Building Inspection Division
399 Elmhurst Street, Room 141
Hayward, CA 94544

Building Permit Processing Hours

Mon. – Fri. 9:00am – 4:00pm *except holidays*

Permit Center Opening Hours

Building/Grading/Planning
Mon. Tue. Thur. & Fri.: 8:30am – 5:00pm
Wed.: 9:00am – 5:00pm

CODES IN EFFECT

Effective As of: January 1, 2011

2010 California Building Standards Code:

- 2010 California Building Code (T24, Part 2).
- 2010 California Residential Code (T24, Part 2.5).
- 2010 California Electrical Code (T24, Part 3).
- 2010 California Mechanical Code (T24, Part 4).
- 2010 California Plumbing Code (T24, Part 5).
- 2010 California Energy Code (T24, Part 6).
- 2010 California Historical Code (T24, Part 8).
- 2010 California Existing Building Code (T24, Part 10).
- 2010 California Green Building Code (T24, Part 11).
- *Alameda County Building Ordinance: The Adoption and Amendments of California Building Standards Code.*

OTHER RESOURCES

- California Solar Permitting Guidebook:
http://opr.ca.gov/docs/California_Solar_Permitting_Guidebook.pdf
- Contractors State License Board:
<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/>



**COUNTY OF ALAMEDA,
PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY,
BUILDING INSPECTION
DEPARTMENT**

399 Elmhurst Street, Hayward, CA 94544
(510) 670-5440, Fax (510) 293-0960
www.acgov.org/pwa/bids.shtml

GUIDELINE

**Residential Rooftop
Solar Photovoltaic (PV)
Permits**

2010 California Building Code

IN UNINCORPORATED ALAMEDA
COUNTY

Developed by:
Building Department,
Alameda County Public Works Agency
In Cooperation with,

Alameda County Community Development Agency
Alameda County Fire Department

*The Interstate Renewable Energy Council and the
Solar Outreach Partnership, funded by the US
Department of Energy*



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