



New York State Unified Solar Permit

Guidelines for Expediting and Improving the Solar Permitting Process

Form/ Application

- ✓ Adopt the NYS Unified Solar Permit to increase consistency and transparency in the permitting process statewide for systems sized 12 kW or less. NYSERDA is offering an incentive of \$2,500-\$5,000 for municipalities that adopt this permit form through the Cleaner, Greener Communities program.
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Information Access

- ✓ Increase the accessibility of permitting information. Post information about the permit application process online, with links to any relevant building and electrical code, licensing or insurance requirements, contact information for questions about the process, and a list of steps in the permitting process.
 - ✓ Post the permit form online for easy accessibility and download. Once an application form is completed, allow installers to submit the form, diagrams, and plans online or via email to reduce time spent traveling to municipal offices.
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Timeline & Fees

- ✓ As part of NYS Unified Solar Permit adoption, commit to issuing a permit determination (issuance or denial) within 14 days upon receipt of complete and accurate applications. Provide feedback within 7 days of receiving incomplete or inaccurate applications so that the installer may correct and resubmit a permit application.
 - ✓ Cap total permitting costs at \$150 or less. Fees should fairly reflect the time needed for municipal staff to review and issue a permit. For small-scale systems, a flat-fee method instead of a valuation-based approach should suffice, as small-scale systems are relatively standardized and variation in the installed cost of a small system does not generally reflect variation in complexity of the system.
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Inspection & Review

- ✓ Establish a single, comprehensive inspection. When a third-party electrical inspection is required, make efforts to coordinate building and electrical inspections if both are required. As part of the NYS Unified Solar Permit adoption, commit to providing time for an inspection within 7 days of inspection request to minimize project cost.
- ✓ Train code enforcement officers in solar. NY-Sun Trainers Network, funded by NYSERDA, will offer trainings as part of the NY-Sun Initiative. This training and education program will educate and train local officials on PV systems.
- ✓ Review zoning ordinances and remove excessive reviews. Certain zoning or design review board reviews may not be necessary for roof-mounted systems that adhere to specific design criteria related to location and visibility of systems.

For more information visit:

NY-Sun: <http://ny-sun.ny.gov/Local-Community-Tools>

NYSolar Smart: <http://www.nysolarsmart.com>

“This standardized permit is a win-win for everyone. Installers and municipalities can now share in a streamlined process. Additionally, the collaboration between NYSERDA, NYPA and CUNY demonstrates the State’s commitment to making solar more affordable for all New Yorkers...” John B. Rhodes, President and CEO, NYSERDA, September, 2013