

### **Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System Permitting Checklist**

The basic, pre-submittal checklist below contains the minimum information and project plan details required to be submitted to [Blacksburg's Planning and Building Department](#) when applying to install a solar photovoltaic (PV) system (residential or small commercial). The intent of using the checklist is to provide transparent and well-defined information to minimize the number of required revisions and expedite the application and review process.

Please note that this information relates to [Building Review and Permitting](#), for rooftop solar installations. For information about possible additional approvals for ground mount solar installations please visit the [Development Application Process](#).

### **Getting Started**

A completed [electric permit application](#) is required for a solar photovoltaic (PV) system. A [building permit application](#) may also be required if structural work accompanies the solar PV installation. Please contact the building official if you have questions about the necessity of a building permit. Please print out the application(s) you need, fill them out completely, and bring them to the Building Safety Department at the Blacksburg Motor Company Building, 400 S. Main St., Blacksburg. You may also fax them to 540-951-0672 or email it to [buildsafe@blacksburg.gov](mailto:buildsafe@blacksburg.gov).

### **Electrical Service Upgrade**

1. When installing a solar array, if the work requires upgrading the electrical service or if the meter or panel is being moved from its existing location, the service is considered new and the connection must go underground, unless determined to be impractical or infeasible by the Zoning Administrator. If you have questions about the requirements for undergrounding of electrical service please contact the Zoning Administrator at [ppatterson@blacksburg.gov](mailto:ppatterson@blacksburg.gov) or 540-443-1300.
2. If the existing service is not being moved or upgraded, it can remain as an overhead connection.
3. All new services must be underground connections.
4. All electrical service upgrades are inspected prior to the meter/power being installed/supplied.
5. Two ground rods are required.
6. If the meter and panel are not back to back; an outside disconnect is required to be installed.
7. The electrical panel must be labeled.

### **Additional Required Documents**

1. Construction Drawings (Residential and Commercial)
  - Two (2) copies of plans showing PV array configuration, wiring system, overcurrent protection, inverter, disconnects, required signs, AC connection to building, and attachment detail for roof mounted or footing details for ground mounted.
2. Spec Sheets & Installation Manuals (Residential and Commercial)
  - Include specification sheets and installation manuals for all manufactured components including, but not limited to PV modules, inverters, combiner box, disconnects, and mounting system.
  - If installations meet certain specifications, they do not require a PE Stamp. The following [roof criteria description form](#) offers additional detail.
3. Commercial installations would need to be signed and sealed by an engineer, for more information on what warrants a commercial application, please contact the Building Official.

## **Permit Fees**

The permit fee for a residential solar PV system is a flat fee of \$30 plus a 2% state surcharge fee. The total cost of a permit will be \$30.60

The permit fee for a commercial solar PV system is \$3.50 per \$1,000 of value of work plus a 2% state surcharge fee. For example, a 100 kW commercial system installed at \$3.00/W would cost \$300,000 and generate a total permit fee of \$1,071.00.

Complete fee information can be found in the Town's [Fee Schedule](#).

## **Review Process Timeline**

The Building Safety Division is committed to providing timely review of solar PV permit applications. Best efforts are made to review completed one and two-family dwelling solar permit applications within 3 days and commercial/non-residential permit applications within 10 days. These turnaround times are typical, not guaranteed. The Town of Blacksburg has a staff of dedicated individuals, but workloads, vacations, and sick leave can cause unforeseen delays that may occasionally impact turnaround time.

Other circumstances that will prolong the permit turnaround time include:

- Applicant does not submit all required information
- Contractor applying for permit is not a licensed contractor
- Equipment is not listed

## **Permit Status**

To check your permit status please visit/call the office of the Building Official at 540-443-1325

## **Permit Expiration**

All permits expire six (6) months after date of issue. Failure to start the work authorized by a permit within this six-month period renders the permit invalid and a new permit must be obtained. Once work begins, noticeable progress must continue until completion.

## **Scheduling an Inspection**

Please call 540-443-1325 if you would like to schedule an inspection or have any questions. Typically, inspections are completed within 48 hours.

A 24-hour notice is required for all inspections. You may request either an AM or PM inspection. A time will not be given for inspections; they are scheduled in the order that they are received. All permit fees must be paid, however, before scheduling an inspection.

For more information on requirements and process for inspections please visit [this webpage](#).

## **Contact Information**

Building Safety Department  
400 S. Main St., Blacksburg. You may also fax it to  
Email: [buildsafe@blacksburg.gov](mailto:buildsafe@blacksburg.gov)  
Call: 540-443-1300  
Fax: 540-951-0672  
Hours: 8 am – 5 pm, Monday - Friday