

SOLAR PV MODEL PERMITTING ORDINANCE FOR CT JURISDICTIONS

PERMITTING ORDINANCE OR ORDINANCE ELEMENTS

Applicability and Scope

This model ordinance is applicable to residential and commercial roof-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. The purpose is to reduce or eliminate permit fees associated with the installation of solar PV systems in order to facilitate affordable deployment of renewable energy, provide a short review period for small-scale solar PV systems, and remove barriers to the installation of solar PV systems installed and owned by a third-party.

The reach of this Ordinance does not currently include but could be expanded in the future to include permitting of solar energy systems more broadly including solar thermal systems and permitting for other types of clean energy systems.

[Text included in square brackets is a note to the municipality rather than text that should be included in the formal ordinance]

ORDINANCE

Section 1. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this regulation to reduce the cost of solar PV system installations and promote the use of renewable energy. This Ordinance seeks to:

- 1) Provide property owners and business owners with flexibility in satisfying their on-site energy needs.
- 2) Reduce overall energy demands within the Municipality and promote energy efficiency.
- 3) Streamline the permitting process for rooftop solar PV systems by updating regulations and administrative procedures related to rooftop solar PV permitting and fees.
- 4) [As applicable] Support [alternatively, further] the Municipality's conservation and development plan [alternatively, comprehensive plan or sustainability goals].

Section 2. Applicability.

- 1) This Ordinance applies to solar PV systems modified, upgraded or installed after the effective date of the Ordinance.
- 2) This Ordinance is effective as of date of adoption unless another date is otherwise specified

Section 3. Permit Fee

For roof-mounted solar PV systems [alternately "For all Class I renewable energy systems as defined in the Connecticut General Statutes"¹], the building permit fee shall be waived [alternately "shall be a flat fee of \$_____"].²

Section 4. Permit Processing

Building and/or electrical permits for roof-mounted solar PV systems shall be issued within [insert applicable number] days of receipt of a complete application.

Section 5. Tax Exemption

Third-party owned or leased solar PV systems shall be exempt from Section [insert applicable section number] of the municipal code, and building permits for third-party owned or leased solar PV systems that shall not be withheld due to delinquent taxes.

¹ [Class I Renewable Energy Systems are defined by Conn. Gen. Stat. §16-1(a)(26), as "(A) energy derived from solar power, wind power, a fuel cell, methane gas from landfills, ocean thermal power, wave or tidal power, low emission advanced renewable energy conversion technologies, a run-of-the-river hydropower facility provided such facility has a generating capacity of not more than five megawatts, does not cause an appreciable change in the river flow, and began operation after July 1, 2003, or a sustainable biomass facility with an average emission rate of equal to or less than .075 pounds of nitrogen oxides per million BTU of heat input for the previous calendar quarter, except that energy derived from a sustainable biomass facility with a capacity of less than five hundred kilowatts that began construction before July 1, 2003, may be considered a Class I renewable energy source, or (B) any electrical generation, including distributed generation, generated from a Class I renewable energy source."]

²[If a flat fee is to be imposed by a municipality it is recommended that the fee reflects the cost of permitting the solar PV system and that it should be no more than \$200. Research conducted for the SunShot Initiative Rooftop Solar Challenge has shown that the cost of permitting for solar energy systems typically does not exceed \$200.]