

GUIDELINE**SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) PERMITS - 2022 CBC**

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

**OVER-THE-COUNTER PV PERMIT CRITERIA**

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

1. The maximum installed PV weight is 5 lbs/ft<sup>2</sup> and a maximum of 40 lbs at any single support point.
2. The existing roof structure will adequately support the PV system and the building is a previously County permitted structure.
3. The maximum installed PV height is 18” above the roof surface at any point.
4. 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.
5. Plans and specifications must be prepared by a California licensed architect, engineer, or qualified contractor. Plans shall be readily

available at permit issuance and onsite during county inspection.

6. The contractor has verified whether upgrade of the existing service panel is required.
7. The County adopts the checklist and standards in the most recent California Solar Permitting Guidebook, which is available at: [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190226-Solar\\_Permitting\\_Guidebook\\_4th\\_Edition.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190226-Solar_Permitting_Guidebook_4th_Edition.pdf)

**PLANNING/ZONING REVIEW**

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

**PV PERMIT APPLICATION**

1. Alameda County building permit application is available online at: <https://www.acpwa.org/permits/portal/index.page>
2. Payment (credit card) can be made online.
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: 0.013% of Project Valuation.
- Misc Fees: \$6.20

Note: Additional electrical components may require fees. 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, a consolidated

final inspection can be scheduled through the following automated systems:

- Online Inspection Request at: <https://acpermit.acgov.org/Portal/#/>, or
- 24-hour Inspection Request Phone Line at 510-670-5434.

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

<https://www.acpwa.org/building-inspection>

A typical rooftop PV system only needs one consolidated inspection, which includes:

- 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 may be necessary. Some examples are non-residential PV systems, ground-mounted PV 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  
Email: [permitbid@acpwa.org](mailto:permitbid@acpwa.org)

**Building Permit Processing Hours**

Mon. Tue. Thur. & Fri.: 8:30am – 4:30pm  
Wed.: 9:00am – 4:30pm  
*Except holidays*

**Permit Center Opening Hours**

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

**CODES IN EFFECT**


Effective As of: January 1, 2023

2022 California Building Standards Code:

- 2022 California Building Code (T24, Part 2).
- 2022 California Residential Code (T24, Part 2.5).
- 2022 California Electrical Code (T24, Part 3).
- 2022 California Mechanical Code (T24, Part 4).
- 2022 California Plumbing Code (T24, Part 5).
- 2022 California Energy Code (T24, Part 6).
- 2022 California Historical Code (T24, Part 8).
- 2022 California Existing Building Code (T24, Part 10).
- 2022 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/20190226-Solar\\_Permitting\\_Guidebook\\_4th\\_Edition.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190226-Solar_Permitting_Guidebook_4th_Edition.pdf)
- Contractors State License Board:  
<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/>



Public Works Agency Alameda County  
399 Elmhurst Street, Hayward, CA 94544  
(510) 670-5440, Fax (510) 293-0960  
<https://www.acpwa.org/permits/building-inspections/index.page?>

GUIDELINE

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

**2022 California Building Code (with AB2188, AB1414, AB1801)**

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*



Public Works Agency Alameda County

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA,  
PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY,  
BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT  
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