



Memorandum

Date:	July 22, 2016
To:	All Municipal Building Officials
From:	Joseph V. Cassidy, P.E., State Building Inspector
Subject:	Permitting for PV Systems

With the availability of utility conservation funds, tax credits and other contractual vehicles spurring the market for PV systems, we continue to see exponential growth in the number of systems being installed. Such quick growth has led to questions, concerns and confusion among contractors and building officials. This memo is an attempt to clarify some of these issues.

Issue #1: Valuation of Systems for permit fee calculation

Given the different contractual arrangements – purchase, lease, power supply, etc. the cost of a PV system is not as clear cut as it is in a typical renovation. The Green Bank does a very good job of tracking the cost of PV projects throughout the state. Based on their data, the cost of a roof mounted system currently averages \$3.00/watt and ground mounted run \$3.50/watt. These costs can be utilized in your normal fee structure.

Some towns have passed ordinances pursuant to CT General Statutes section 29-263 (c) exempting renewable projects from permit fees. Some towns have established flat fees from \$100 - \$200 per system.

If your town is not waiving fees or setting a flat fee, we encourage you to use the green banks values, as they are valid, locally verified numbers, to set consistent valuations across the State.

Issue #2: Structural analysis for roof mounted systems

The [Structural Review Worksheet](#) available on the Green Bank website, provides a competent contractor a good tool for evaluating a typical “modern” framed house. This may eliminate the need for a structural engineer’s analysis for some “standard” installations. Other circumstances may require review and analysis by a licensed professional engineer.

Issue #3: Which trade license, what work scope

A PV system project may require 2-3 licensed trades to complete the installation.

PV licensed person (Limited Solar Electric) is limited to installation of the PV system and equipment from securement to the roof to wiring terminated at a controller or in a junction box or which is part of the PV system.

E licensed person (Unlimited Electrical) must make the connection from the system terminal location to the building electrical system. They may also install the PV system.

Home Improvement Contractor registration is required for any alterations needed to the home to accept/support the PV system.

Issue #4: Online / electronic permit applications

Some towns have online permitting systems in place. Other accept applications via email or fax. If you do not have an online presence currently, I would encourage you to discuss it with your town leaders as a positive constituent service for all residents and contractors doing business with your office. It could also be a tool to help you run your office more efficiently. There is a good [informational document](#) on systems currently in use around the state on the Green Bank's website. CRCOG has a system it has sponsored which is used in several towns, or talk to your fellow building officials about their systems.