



**Snohomish County**  
Planning and Development  
Services

Visit us at :

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**ONLINE INFORMATION**  
[www.snohomishcountywa.gov/1190](http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/1190)



This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

# Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems

Assistance Bulletin

# # 104

Revised July 2021

[WWW.SNOCO.ORG](http://WWW.SNOCO.ORG)

Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

**Q:** Do I need a building / mechanical permit to install a residential solar photovoltaic (PV) system?

**A:** Residential solar PV systems mounted on the ground do not require a building or mechanical permit. The installation of a residential *roof* mounted PV solar system meeting all of the following criteria will not require a building or mechanical permit:

- PV system is designed for a rooftop of a house in compliance with applicable codes.
- Attachment to the roof will be as specified by the mounting system manufacturer. Mounting system is engineered and designed for the PV system.
- Method of waterproofing roof penetrations are provided.
- Supports for solar panels are installed to spread the dead load across as many roof-framing members as needed to ensure that no point loads in excess of 50 pounds are created.
- Rooftop is made from lightweight material such as shingles.
- Each photovoltaic array is no larger than 150 feet by 150 feet in either axis.
- Total dead load of panels, supports, mountings, raceways and all other appurtenances weigh no more than 4 pounds per square feet.
- Panels are mounted no higher than 18 inches above the surface of the roofing to which they are affixed. Except for flat roofs, no portion of the system exceeds the highest point of the roof. Panels on flat roofs cannot exceed the maximum height allowed for the building unless approved by the Snohomish County Planning and Development Services (PDS).
- The installation complies with the IFC section 1204 and all land use and other applicable codes even if a permit is not required.
- All signage and markings required by the IFC are provided.
- The equipment layout meets the IFC section 1204.2 'Access and Pathways' requirements. Please see the Residential Solar Systems Construction Tip Sheet ([Guidelines and Tip Sheets | MBP \(mybuildingpermit.com\)](#)) on MyBuildingPermit.com for setback requirements and exceptions. This does not apply to roofs with slopes of 2 units vertical in 12 units horizontal (2:12) or less.

Please refer to the current version of the IFC ([Washington State Building Code Council Amendment](#)) for all Fire Code requirements.

Please be advised that whether or not a mechanical permit is required, an electrical permit through [Washington State Department of Labor and Industries](#) is still required. Please contact the Everett local office at 425-290-1300.

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

**Q:** Do I need a permit to install a commercial solar photovoltaic (PV) system?

**A:** A mechanical permit is required for the installation of all commercial solar PV systems.

**Q:** How do I get a permit?

**A:** All mechanical permits for PV systems are submitted at [MyBuildingPermit.com](http://MyBuildingPermit.com). For information on using our online permitting system, please see the following web page: <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/3920/Online-Permitting>. If you need additional assistance with the online process, please call our office at 425-388-3311.

When applying on MyBuildingPermit.com, please use the following path:

**Application Type:** Mechanical

**Project Type:** Single Family Residential (commercial customers, please use Mixed Use, Multifamily Residential, Nonresidential, or Townhome)

**Activity Type:** New (or Alteration, or Repair or Replacement depending on your activity)

**Scope of Work:** None

The following items are required to apply for a mechanical permit for Solar PV systems:

1. Structural plans and calculation provided by a Washington State Licensed Engineer. Plans should be drawn to scale (1/4" = 1' is preferred) and include at least one plan view and one elevation view.
2. For commercial: A Base Site Plan is required for commercial ground mounted solar PV systems.

**Q:** How much does the permit cost?

**A:**

	Base Fee	Fee per system	Plan Review Fee	Technology Fee
<b>Residential</b>	\$80.00	\$7.00	\$9.75	3%
<b>Commercial</b>	\$125.00	\$15.00	\$12.75	3%

[Snohomish County Code 30.86.400](#)

**Q:** Who should I contact if I have questions?

**A:** You may contact us if you have any questions via:

Online: [Ask A Permit Tech](#)

Telephone: 425-388-3311

Visit us at: 2nd Floor, Robert J. Drewel Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett

You may also review the [Guidelines and Tip Sheets](#) on MyBuildingPermit.com.