

# TUSTIN...



Proud of its Heritage, Preparing for its Future...

August 2015

## USER GUIDE FOR THE INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS

### PURPOSE

This user guide provides information as to the City of Tustin requirements for the installation of photovoltaic systems.

### BACKGROUND

California Assembly Bill (AB) 2188 required local governments to adopt a solar ordinance by September 30, 2015 that created a streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar systems. By improving the efficiency of solar permitting statewide, AB 2188 was intended to help lower the cost of solar installations and further expand the accessibility of solar to more California homeowners who want to control their electricity bills and generate their own clean energy. In addition, making solar energy more affordable will help the State reach its renewable energy and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

On July 21, 2015, the Tustin City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1456 to comply with state law. Ordinance No. 1456 creates an expedited, streamlined permitting process for solar PV and solar thermal systems consistent with the goals and intent of the California Solar Rights Act and substantially conforms to the recommendations, standard plans, and checklists found in the Office of Planning and Research's Solar Permitting Guidebook. Plan check for small photovoltaic projects (submitted with complete information) will be completed and permits or authorizations issued within three days.

In addition, Ordinance No. 1456 provides an expedited inspection process. Only one inspection will be required for installations eligible for expedited review unless corrections occur at the time of that inspection. It is the Building Division's current practice to perform all inspections within 24 hours of request.

### SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A building and/or electrical permit is required for the installation of any photovoltaic system.

Pursuant to AB 2188 and Ordinance No. 1456, the Building Division has established a checklist of all requirements with which small rooftop solar energy systems shall comply to be eligible for expedited review, as well as the standard plan and submittal documents necessary for expedited permit review. Ordinance No. 1456, the checklists and plan

requirements are also consistent with guidance provided by the Governor's Solar Permitting Task Force (California Solar Permitting Guidebook), and the California Building Officials' (CALBO) model ordinance and analysis of Assembly Bill 2188.

Future applications for Solar PV which meet simplified conditions as established by AB 2188 shall "substantially conform" to the checklist and standard plan and submittal requirements. In other words, once the City completes plan check and confirms that the application and supporting documents are complete and meet the requirements of the checklist, all required permits or authorizations will be issued. Best practices dictate this review process should take not more than three (3) days.

Online permitting is a best practice. On a case by case basis, the Division is willing to accept faxed or emailed photovoltaic system plan submittals that meet the checklist and standard plan and submittal requirements provided in this handout.

Only one (1) inspection will be required for installations eligible for expedited review unless corrections occur at the time of that inspection. Pre-inspections or rough inspections will not be required. The Building Division's current practice is to perform all inspections within 24 hours of request.

The following guidance documents are available for the preparation and submittal of a photovoltaic system permit application for one- and two-family dwellings.

- [Project Processing](#)
- [PV Submittal Checklist](#)
- [Submittal Requirements](#)
- [City of Tustin Residential PV Standard Notes](#)
- [String Inverter Systems](#)
- [Micro-Inverter and AC Module Systems](#)
- [Optimizer Systems](#)
- [Common Inspection Guidelines](#)

**City of Tustin**  
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300 Centennial Way  
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(714) 573-3131 or 573-3132

Staff is available to answer your questions during office hours between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Fridays.

**OTHER USER GUIDES AVAILABLE**

Signs  
Pools and Spas  
Residential Room Additions  
Temporary Use Permits  
Gazebos and Patio Covers  
Reroofing  
Furnaces  
Water Heaters  
Wood and Metal Fences  
Masonry Fences & Walls  
Patio Slabs and Walkways  
Suspended Ceilings  
Drywall Installation  
Commercial Tenant Improvements  
Retaining Walls  
Chain Link Fences

PREPARED BY THE CITY OF TUSTIN  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



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