

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-13

(SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS)

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors ordains as follows (omitting the parenthetical footnotes from the official text of the enacted or amended provisions of the County Ordinance Code).

SECTION I. SUMMARY. This ordinance amends the Ordinance Code to establish a permitting process for solar energy systems, and an expedited, streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems, pursuant to Government Code section 65850.5.

SECTION II. Chapter 718-12 is added to the County Ordinance Code, to read:

Chapter 718-12 Solar Energy Systems

718-12.002 Building permit required.

- (a) A building permit is required to install a solar energy system. "Solar energy system" has the meaning set forth in Civil Code section 801.5.
- (b) An application for a building permit to install a solar energy system will be processed in accordance with Government Code section 65850.5. (Ord. 2015-13 § 2.)

718-12.004 Review of applications for small residential rooftop solar energy systems. The following expedited, streamlined permitting process applies to applications for a building permit to install a small residential rooftop solar energy system:

- (a) **Application.** The building official will make the following available on the County website: the County's standard building permit application form; and the County's standard small residential rooftop solar energy system plan form and checklist, which will substantially conform to the plan form and checklist in the most current version of the California Solar Permitting Guidebook published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The checklist will include all requirements that a small residential rooftop solar energy system must meet to be eligible for review and approval under this section. An application to install a small residential rooftop solar energy system may be submitted electronically.
- (b) **Application review.** An application will be deemed complete if the building official determines that the application includes all of the information and documents required by the standard application form, the standard plan form, and the standard checklist. If an application is deemed incomplete, the building official will notify the applicant in writing of the additional information needed to complete the application. After an application is deemed complete, the building official will perform an expedited review of the application and all submittals in substantial conformance with the timeline set forth in the

then-current edition of the California Solar Permitting Guidebook published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

- (c) Permit issuance. A building permit will be issued following the building official's approval of an application for a small residential rooftop solar energy system and after all required fees have been paid. If the application was submitted electronically, the permit may be issued electronically.
- (d) Inspection and authorization to operate. As soon as practicable after the applicant notifies the building official that a small residential rooftop solar energy system has been installed under a building permit, the building official will inspect the system to verify compliance with the building permit. If the building official determines that a system was not installed in compliance with a building permit, the building official will notify the permittee of the actions needed to comply with the building permit and will conduct additional inspections as necessary. No small residential rooftop solar energy system may be operated unless the building official verifies in writing that it complies with the building permit.
- (e) For purposes of this section, a "small residential rooftop solar energy system" means a solar energy system that meets all of the following requirements:
 - (1) The system is no larger than 10 kilowatts alternating current nameplate rating, or 30 kilowatts thermal; and
 - (2) The system, including its installation, conforms to all applicable fire, building, electrical, and other standard codes in Title 7 of this Code; and
 - (3) The system conforms to all applicable requirements of Civil Code section 714; and
 - (4) The system is located on a rooftop of a detached single-family dwelling or a duplex; and
 - (5) The system, when installed on a rooftop, does not exceed the building height limit of the zoning district in which it is located. (Ord. 2015-13 § 2.)

718-12.006 Requirements cumulative. The requirements of this chapter are in addition to any other applicable requirements of this Code, and any requirements of a utility provider, that must be satisfied before a solar energy system may be installed or operated. (Ord. 2015-13 § 2.)

SECTION III. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after passage, and, within fifteen days after passage, shall be published once, with the names of the supervisors voting for or against it, in the Contra Costa Times, a newspaper published in this County.

PASSED on _____ by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST: DAVID J. TWA
 Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
 and County Administrator

Board Chair

By: _____
Deputy

[SEAL]

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