

ANALYSIS

This ordinance amends Title 26 — Building Code of the Los Angeles County Code by adding Chapter 68 — Expedited Permitting for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Energy Systems, in compliance with the requirements of California Assembly Bill 2188, enacted into law in August 2014, to provide an expedited, streamlined permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems. This new Chapter adds administrative provisions that are not in the current California Building Code.

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ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance amending Title 26 — Building Code of the Los Angeles County Code by adding Chapter 68 — Expedited Permitting for Small Residential Rooftop Solar Energy Systems to provide for expedited permit processing of small residential rooftop solar energy systems.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 68 is hereby added to read as follows:

CHAPTER 68

EXPEDITED PERMITTING FOR SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Sections:

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6807.4 Minimum photovoltaic System Standards.

6807.5 Minimum Solar Thermal System Standards.

SECTION 6801 SCOPE

The provisions of this Chapter are intended to help the State of California reach its economic, energy and environmental goals by providing a standardized and streamlined permitting process to encourage the use of small residential rooftop solar energy systems. This Chapter shall apply to the permitting process for small residential rooftop solar energy systems that meet the requirements of Section 6807 which shall be installed on a one or two family dwelling and involve either a photovoltaic system that is no larger than 10 kilowatts alternating current or a solar thermal system that is no larger than 30 kilowatts thermal.

SECTION 6802 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Chapter, words and terms shall be defined as set forth in this Section. Where terms are not defined in this Code and are defined in other codes, such terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them as in those codes. Where terms are not defined through the methods authorized by this Section, such terms shall have ordinary accepted meanings such as the context implies.

KILOWATT THERMAL. Unit of measurement to approximate the amount of energy produced by a solar thermal collector. Each square meter of collector space equals 0.7 kilowatt-thermal.

SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM. A rooftop solar energy system that meets the requirements of Section 6807 which shall be installed on a one or two family dwelling and which does not exceed 10 kilowatts alternating current nameplate rating or 30 kilowatts thermal.

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM. Solar energy system shall mean either of the following:

1. Any solar collector or other solar energy device whose primary purpose is to provide for the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy for space heating, space cooling, electric generation, or water heating.
2. Any structural design feature of a building, whose primary purpose is to provide for the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy for electricity generation, space heating or cooling, or for water heating.

SECTION 6803 FEES

Permit fees for the installation of small residential rooftop solar energy systems shall be charged according to the applicable fees prescribed in Section 107 of this Code, Section 82-8 of the Electrical Code and Sections 103.10 and 103.11 of the Plumbing Code. The permit fee for small residential rooftop photovoltaic systems shall not exceed \$500 unless modified by or in accordance with Government Code section 66015 or other applicable law.

SECTION 6804 APPLICATION FOR PERMITS

The application for a permit shall meet the requirements of Section 106.4 and may be submitted in person or electronically through the online submittal system

maintained by the Building Official. Prior to submitting the application for a permit, the applicant shall verify that the installation shall meet all criteria in Section 6807 to qualify for expedited permit issuance. Upon receipt of a small residential rooftop solar energy system application, plan check review will be completed within one to three business days.

When an incomplete application is submitted, a written correction notice detailing all deficiencies in the application and any additional information required to be eligible for expedited permit issuance will be issued.

SECTION 6805 PERMITS

A combined solar energy permit may be issued for small residential rooftop solar energy systems, which will include all building, electrical, and plumbing work. The combined solar energy permit shall be subject to the requirements of this Code, the Electrical Code, and the Plumbing Code.

SECTION 6806 INSPECTIONS

6806.1 General.

All construction or work for small residential rooftop solar energy systems for which a permit is required shall be subject to inspection by the Building Official and such construction or work shall remain accessible and exposed for inspection purposes until approved by the Building Official as specified in Section 108.

6806.2 Required Inspections.

A combination inspection shall be conducted to inspect the structural, electrical, and plumbing components of the installation of small residential rooftop solar energy

systems. One inspection shall be required for the system. Evidence satisfactory to the Building Official as identified in Building Code Manual 6807 Article 1 must be provided at the inspection to verify the installation and labeling of components meet requirements of this Code, the Plumbing Code and the Electrical Code. The Building Official may require exposure of the following components if sufficient evidence regarding installation and labeling is not provided:

1. Fastening of roof mounting system to structural framing members.
2. Grounding and bonding of panels.
3. Nameplates of modules and inverters.

If the small residential rooftop solar energy system fails inspection, a subsequent inspection is authorized which is not required to conform to the requirements of this chapter.

SECTION 6807 SMALL RESIDENTIAL ROOFTOP SOLAR ENERGY

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

6807.1 General.

The design of small residential rooftop solar energy systems shall comply with this Section to qualify for expedited permit issuance.

6807.2 Height Limit.

The solar panel or module array shall not exceed the maximum legal building height as defined in the Los Angeles County Planning and Zoning Code, Building Code, and Residential Code, or other applicable legal authority, based on the most restrictive provision.

6807.3 Solar Permitting Guidebook.

The submitted plans must comply with Building Code Manual 6807 Article 1 including its checklist and standard plans as developed in substantial compliance with the California Solar Permitting Guidebook adopted by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and as adopted by the Building Official.

6807.4 Minimum Photovoltaic System Standards.

The photovoltaic system shall be identified and listed for the application as referenced in the Electrical Code.

6807.5 Minimum Solar Thermal System Standards.

Systems for heating water in dwellings and heating water in swimming pool applications shall be certified by Solar Rating and Certification Corporation or other approved listing agencies as specified in the Plumbing Code.

6807.6 Compliance With Laws.

The solar energy system shall comply with the applicable Los Angeles County Codes and California health and safety laws.

[TITLE26CH68CSCC]