Online Solar Permitting: Cost-effective Streamlined Permitting

Tracy Jones, eCity Gov (MyBuildingPermit.com)
Rob Chave, City of Edmonds (PermitTrax)
Gary Nordeen, WSU Energy Program
WEBINAR HOUSEKEEPING

• Technical Difficulties: Call (206) 625-1300

• To submit a question or comment: Maximize the “Questions” portion, type your message, and click the “Send” button.

PowerPoint will be available on the Northwest Solar Communities website: www.nwsolarcommunities.org
1. MyBuildingPermit.com
2. PermtiTrax
3. Q&A with Presenters
4. Updates in the building code *(Due to personal reasons, Gary will no longer be able to present. However, his slides can be found at the end of this presentation.)*
Northwest Solar Communities is a coalition of over 30 jurisdictions, utilities, industry partners and citizen groups in Oregon & Washington working together to make rooftop solar simpler, faster and more cost effective.

Streamlined Permitting for 2 million

Standard Interconnection for 10 million

Expanded Access to Financing

Solar Friendly Codes & Zoning

We will establish a more uniform solar market across the Pacific Northwest by replicating local success in a solar friendly corridor

nwsolarcommunities.org
THE SOLAR “RUSH” IN WASHINGTON
# OTC Permit Checklist

**OVER-THE-COUNTER BUILDING PERMIT CHECKLIST FOR RESIDENTIAL SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS: ROOFTOP MOUNTED**

Contractors can apply for an Over-The-Counter (OTC) permit where the PV system meets the requirements listed in this checklist. All project plans and supporting documentation must be provided on site for the inspector.

---TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT---

## 1. Project Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Owner Name:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Address:</td>
<td>Parcel #:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City:</td>
<td>State:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Phone:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractor License #:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PV System Description:**
- Include manufacturer and model # of PV modules and inverters:

## 2. Determine if your project qualifies for expedited permitting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. PV system is designed and proposed for a detached one or two-family dwelling or townhouse not more than three stories above grade or detached accessory structure that is code compliant</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Modules on pitched roofs do not exceed the highest point of the roof unless approved by the local jurisdiction</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Roof is made from lightweight material such as a single layer of composition shingles, metal roofing, lightweight masonry, or cedar shingles</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The installation shall comply with the manufacturer’s instructions, (IRC M2302.2)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Northwest Solar Communities**

**Best Practices Flyer**

**Online Permitting Options for Local Governments**

**Why use online permitting?**
Local governments are increasingly turning to online permitting solutions to save time, improve customer service, and track data more efficiently. An online permitting system can significantly reduce time and expense for contractors and citizens who would otherwise need to schedule in-person appointments. Local governments can also reduce the time required to review, track, and approve permits. An online system can improve recordkeeping and tracking processes, provide automated notifications for enhanced customer service, reduce the risk of human error and improve staff efficiency and coordination across departments. A fully online system would enable all aspects of the permit process – application submission, plan review, fee payment, and delivery of approved permits via email or a website – within a short period of time.

**What are the features of online permitting software?**
The primary distinguishing features of different online permitting software options include:

- **Customizable and Automated Reports.** Allows staff to create report templates tailored to their department’s needs and to automatically populate these reports with information stored in the permitting database.
- **Government Management Modules.** Optional modules may be added to the basic permitting module to allow multiple government functions to work seamlessly under a single software system. Modules may include asset management, planning, financial management, zoning, and code compliance.
- **Fee Calculations & Payment.** Fees may be calculated automatically based on pre-programmed pricing factors, allowing staff to easily determine fees. Fees may be invoiced and paid online with a credit card.
- **Geographic Information System (GIS) Integration.** May include build-in GIS functions that allow viewing, manipulation, and creation of maps and property parcel information.
- **Inter-Departmental Tracking.** Allows staff to track the status of permit application or plan reviews across departments. Staff can track which individuals or departments have approved documents and which have not.
- **Automated Document Distribution.** Allows staff to flag a document for review by another staff person. When staff log in to the system, they will be notified that a document is awaiting review.
- **Automated Reminders.** Automatically notifies staff of assigned tasks and approaching deadlines.
- **Online Application Submittal & Tracking.** Allows the public to submit the permit application and supporting documents (word documents, spreadsheets, fax, PDF, CAD files, images, etc.) and to check on the status of their permit application over the Internet. Once submitted, the documents are stored in the system database, allowing staff access.
- **Web Interface.** Allows staff and the public to view and submit data to the system over the Internet. Some software is entirely web-based so that staff perform all their tasks through the website, while others use the website primarily for public access to the system. The website may be hosted by the jurisdiction or the system vendor, depending on the IT capability of the jurisdiction to maintain the server software and hardware.
- **Legacy Database Options.** Software vendors may be able to convert data in a jurisdiction’s existing database to the new system or create an interface that allows the new system to access data from the old system.

For more information on how Northwest Solar Communities can support your jurisdiction in adopting an online permitting solution that includes solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, please see [www.nwscommunities.org](http://www.nwscommunities.org).

Last updated 04-22-2013
YOUR ONE-STOP PERMITTING PORTAL
Simple. Convenient. Smart.
MyBuildingPermit.com

Apply for permits from anywhere at anytime

Save Gas & Driving Time

Apply for Permits From Home or Office

Save Trees for Climbing Not Rolls of Paper
MyBuildingPermit.com

What is MyBuildingPermit.com?

- Regional partnership to improve the permit application experience
- Provide a permit portal that connects to each Jurisdictions backend system
- Provide interpretation of building code, guidance, and checklists

We serve 14 jurisdictions and 1.3M citizens

- Bellevue
- Bothell
- Burien
- Issaquah
- Kenmore
- Kirkland
- Mercer Island
- Mill Creek
- Newcastle
- Renton
- Sammamish
- Snohomish County
- Snoqualmie
- Woodinville
Permit Applications

• Building
• Clearing & Grading
• Electrical
• Fire
• Land Use
• Mechanical
• Plumbing
• Right of Way
• Signs
• Utilities

Other Services include....

• Inspection scheduling
• Permit status information
• Construction tip sheets
• Interpretations and guidelines
• Inspection checklist
• Regional training
When MyBuildingPermit.com was first created, there was nothing like it in the market and it evolved to meet the changing needs of both jurisdictions and customers.

Our Guiding Permitting Practice

- Recognize that online service offerings are critical for meeting customer needs
- Develop consistent interpretation of building codes and provide checklists
- Provide consistent services to customers
- Share operational best practices between Jurisdictions
MyBuildingPermit.com

Biggest challenges

• Political & Management support
• Technology is ongoing...
  □ Implementation
  □ Maintenance
  □ Changing user needs/expectations
• Move from paper to online processes
• Internal change management

Biggest rewards

• Better serve customers
  □ Save driving time
  □ Reduce paper cost
  □ Apply 24/7
  □ Track all permits in one location
• Improve internal processes
  □ OTCs process themselves
  □ Streamline online process
  □ Increase staff flexibility
  □ Save paper and storage
  □ Reduce effort for PRRs

The Man on Top of the Mountain Didn’t Fall There
MyBuildingPermit.com

Paper savings for customers

Swedish Hospital

Paper permitting resulted in 5,000 pounds of paper and $63,000 in printing cost

Single Family Home

Estimated $396.00 print savings per home
Online applications are trending upward

- Nearly 30% apply at more than 1 jurisdiction
- More than 50% of contractors submit multiple applications
- More than 90,000 permits processed since 2010
- Over 15,000 applicants are registered
In 2015, we accepted 21,000 non-plan review (over the counter) applications. Staff savings of about 20 minutes per application, equalling 7,000 staff hours.
### Building Inspections scheduled online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bothell</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burien</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issaquah</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenmore</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkland</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercer Island</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Creek</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renton</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sammamish</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sno County</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snoqualmie</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodinville</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>57%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How long to get a permit?

Non Plan Review (Over the Counter)
• Apply – Pay – Receive permit within minutes

Plan Review
• Times for permit vary
  ❑ Plan Review permits depend upon internal review
  ❑ Often require corrections or more information
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter)

• Select the city from drop-down
• Select the application type

- **Building**: Permits for construction, modification or demolition of a building or structure.
- **Clearing and Grading**: Permits for land surface disturbance or tree and vegetation maintenance.
- **Electrical**: Permits for electrical equipment or systems.
- **Fire**: Permits for fire suppression, fire alarms, fuel tanks, and related systems.
- **Land Use**: Actions establishing use, project approvals, land division or pre-application services.
- **Mechanical**: Permits for mechanical equipment or systems.
- **Plumbing**: Permits for plumbing equipment or systems.
- **Right-of-Way**: Permits for work in, or activities occurring in, the public right-of-way.
- **Sign**: Permits and approvals for signs.
- **Utilities**: Permits for water, sewer, or stormwater systems.
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Select the project and activity type

  * Application Type: [Mechanical](#): Permits for mechanical equipment or systems.

  * Project Type: [Single Family Residential](#): 1 or 2 unit dwellings and all buildings and structures accessory to this use.

  * Activity Type: [Alteration](#): Modifying an existing system resulting in a change to the original arrangement, use, or purpose. Does not include any new floor area.
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Complete the project details, enter project value, and click continue.
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Receive summary explaining that application can be completed without review
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

• Specify who is doing the work

Who is doing the work?

- I am doing the work myself
- A contractor has been selected

Property Owner Certification Statement

I certify under penalty of perjury that I am the property owner or agent and I am exempt from the requirements of the Contractor Registration laws, RCW 18.27, (Definitions, RCW 18.27.010 and Exemptions, RCW 18.27.090) and I will do all my own work.

Agree Disagree
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Verify applicant information. If not in system, then opportunity to Register

![Application Form]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Application:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parcel Owner Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Applicant Information

- First Name: Ruby
- Last Name: Jones
- Company Name: MBP
- Email Address: jonesruby2018@gmail.com
- Phone Number: (655) 555-5555
- Phone Extension: 

### Address Information

- Address Number: 11720
- Street Name or PO Box: 97th Lane NE (Ex: PO Box 1234)
- Apartment or Suite Number: Apt A118
- City: Kirkland
- State: WA
- Zip Code: 98034

Save & Continue
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Select correct work location
Pay online
Apply for Non-Plan Review Permits (Over the Counter) continued...

- Receive order confirmation and Permit via email
Apply for Plan Review Permits

- The process is the same as Non-Plan Review, but applicants must submit additional required information and files.
Apply for Plan Review Permits

- Track all applications on the dashboard. See applications that Need Attention, Submitted, Not Accepted, Issued, Closed
Advice for those considering online permitting

Be aware of all challenges and develop a plan

- Be realistic about timeframes for implementing
- Obtain political and business support
- Determine how it will be financed
- Start small and build from there
- Take internal change management seriously
- Streamline process for online applications

Ask questions

- Call other jurisdictions to find out what permitting tool they are using and how it is working for them
- Find out how other cities reorganized to enable online permitting
Edmonds Development Services Department

ONLINE SOLAR PERMITTING
City of Edmonds

- City of ~40,000
- A record 1,443 building permits in 2015
- Existing website, maintained by City staff
- Existing permit tracking system
  - Annual maintenance ~$16,000/year
  - Includes customized enhancements & assistance
- Permit system and other permit-related technologies supported by $25 “technology fee” applied to every building permit
First Steps: Focus on Internal Processes

- Joined DOE’s Pacific NW Solar Partnership with four other jurisdictions in 2012-2013
- Initiated review of solar permitting in the city
- Little experience with solar permitting, but it was evident that improvements could be made
Initial Improvements

- Checklist for eligible streamlined permitting
- Flat fee for residential installations
- Reduced cost for commercial projects
  - Removed value of panels & inverters from project valuation for calculating fees
- Created exception from height limits in zoning code
Online solar permitting began to be implemented during 2013 using:

- Existing website
- Existing permitting software

In our case, no additional cost to implement; this “enhancement” was covered in the annual maintenance contract for the permit system.
Online Permitting

- Link from City website to online permit portal, which links to City’s internal permitting system
- Permitting system and public portal both provided by Bitco Software’s PermitTrax software
Rooftop Solar Installations

A building permit is required for the installation or replacement of solar/photovoltaic (PV) systems, including rooftop arrays, ground-mounted arrays and PV water heaters. An electrical permit is required from the State Department of Labor & Industries.

Single family residential rooftop installations meeting the criteria in a regionally developed checklist are eligible to obtain a building permit online through the city’s website or over-the-counter at the permit center in City Hall. The checklist can be completed through the City’s online permit system, or it can be downloaded here as a fillable-PDF file which you can mail in or bring to the Development Services permit counter at City Hall (121 5th Ave N).

Edmonds is a Northwest Solar Community, working to promote solar energy and bring down the soft costs associated with installing rooftop solar electricity. Working under a Department of Energy’s Rooftop Solar Challenge grant program, this nationwide effort engaged diverse teams of local and state governments along with utilities, installers, non-governmental organizations, and others to make solar energy more accessible and affordable. As part of this project, the Cities of Bellevue, Edmonds, Seattle and Ellensburg worked with internal departments and industry stakeholders to develop a streamlined, expedited permitting process for rooftop mounted, residential solar PV systems.

- View/download the solar checklist
- Apply online for a Simple Rooftop PV Permit

Contact: Leif Bjorback, Building Official

Helpful links:
- Edmonds Solar Handout #B74
- Snohomish PUD “Solar Express”
- Sustainable Edmonds
- Northwest Solar Communities
- www.solarabc.org/permitting
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Helpful links
- Edmonds Solar Handout #874
- Snohomish PUD "Solar Express"
- Sustainable Edmonds
- Northwest Solar Communities
- www.solarabcs.org/permitting
Welcome rob.chave@edmondswa.gov

Development Services Department Online Permit Information

Welcome to the Development Services Department online permit information system. You may use this system to view the status of current and past permits. If you have any questions please call (425) 771-0220.

Additional Information

- View The City Of Edmonds Website
- Visit Our Development Services Website

Inspections

Request inspection  View Scheduled Inspections

Once registered you may login and request an inspection for your permits.

Apply Online for Permit

Click To Apply Online  How To Apply

Apply for a permit online. Simple permits that do not require a formal review process can be easily applied and paid for online.

Please Note: Only Single Family Plumbing, Mechanical, Re-Roof Permits and Critical Areas are available for purchase online. Residential Solar/Photovoltaic are now available online.
New Permit

To apply, select a permit type from the list below and click Apply for Permit.

Critical Area Online Permit

- Critical Area Checklist to determine whether any potential Critical Areas are, or may be, present on and/or adjacent to the subject property.

Plumbing/Mechanical

- Online Plumbing/Mechanical permits are limited to single family dwellings except for domestic-style water heaters in a commercial building.
- Online plumbing permits are limited to gas and electric water heaters, gas piping, repair or replacement of water service line and repair or replacement of water or waste piping within the house. This does not include installation of hydronic systems.
- Online mechanical permits are limited to gas and electric furnaces, heat pumps, AC units, gas fireplaces and single duct exhaust fans.

Rooftop Solar/Photovoltaic

- Simple rooftop PV systems that meet the criteria within the "Expedited Permitting Checklist" may be permitted via this online portal. The checklist was designed to allow most simple installations to obtain a building permit without a formal city plan review.
- Electrical permits and inspections will be required from State Labor And Industries.
# Online Solar / Photovoltaic Requirements

EXPEDITED PERMITTING CHECKLIST FOR RESIDENTIAL PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS: ROOFTOP MOUNTED

The following questions will determine if your project is eligible for an online or over-the-counter permit.

*If you answer yes to all of the below questions, your PV installation is eligible for an online or OTC building permit.*

## Online Solar Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) PV System is designed and proposed for a detached single-family house?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) PV system is designed for rooftop of a house in general compliance with applicable codes?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Mounting system is engineered and designed for PV?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Rooftop is made from lightweight material such as shingles?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) PV system will be permitted and pre-approved by labor and Industries Electrical Division?</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) To address uplift, panels are mounted no higher than 18&quot; above the surface of the roofing to which they are affixed? Except for flat roofs, no portion of the system may exceed the highest point of the roof.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Total dead load of panels, supports, mountings, raceways, and all other appurtenances weigh no more than one of the following. If YES, indicate which:</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No more than three and one-half (3.5) pounds per square foot (PSF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Frameless panels on at least 3/12 pitch roof weighing no more than four and one-half (4.5) PSF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Frameless panels on at least 6/12 pitch roof weighing no more than five (5.0) PSF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) 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 fifty (50) pounds are created.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Attachment to the roof is specified by the mounting system manufacturer.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) One of the following fire safety features will be implemented if YES, indicate which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dwellings fire sprinkler system installed in accordance with IFC 603.3.1.3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- At least one 3' path is provided from roof gutter to ridge for firefighter access or the array does not occur on the approach side of fire apparatus access.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Home is code compliant to setbacks and height, or code allows expansion of nonconformity for solar panels.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) Panels are mounted no higher than the roof ridge or apex of roof (applies only to pitched roofs).</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I certify that all of the information provided on this form is correct!  

Continue
**ADDRESS**

Please search for and select the address where the work will be completed.

Please check to make sure the site you are applying for is within the City limits of Edmonds. You may call us at (425) 771-0220 to confirm or visit the [Snohomish County Website Parcel Viewer](#).

---

**Search for Address**

Search for Address: 121 5th

(example: 100 main)

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Dir</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5TH AVE</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>EDMONDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5TH AVE</td>
<td></td>
<td>EDMONDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Property Owner

Please verify the property owner information and change any information that may be incorrect.

Choose a previously entered contact: PROP OWNER

Business Name: EDMONDS
Last Name: EDMONDS
First Name: CITY OF
Address: 250 5TH AVENUE N
City: EDMONDS
Phone: EDMONDS
Alt Phone: EDMONDS
Fax: 
E-Mail: 

Continue
CITY BUSINESS LICENSE INFO / WORK DESCRIPTION

Please fill in the items below. Items with RED shading are required fields. The City of Edmonds requires that a licensed contractor have a valid City Business License to conduct business within the limits of the city. If the property owner is to complete the work, please enter N/A in the City Business License field.

Contractor City Business License Number: N/A

(Mark as "N/A" if owner is to do the work.)

How many Kilowatts does the system have? 4.0

Please Describe the Work to be Done:

Solar panels mounted on roof per manufacturers specs.
PERMIT FEES

The following is a list of the permit fees due for this project.

Once you click continue, you will be re-directed to the payment processing page. Once payment has been received you can visit Citizens Connect again and view the status of your permit application. Your permit application will be available to view at the bottom of the Citizens Connect Home page under the section My Permits.

Once this online permit application has been submitted to the city, you can expect a response within 2 business days. The city's development services department will review your application and if no other information is required, your permit will be ISSUED and work may start.

Please be sure to read the second page of the issued permit for permit conditions and required inspections.

Online permits expire 180 days after permit issuance and all inspection approvals must be granted before the permit expires.

 Permit Fees - Step 1 of 3 of Payment Processing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fee ID</th>
<th>Fee Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Paid</th>
<th>Balance Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>X-Permit Surcharge Fee</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215</td>
<td>SOLAR PERMIT FEE</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$145.00
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Credit Card Information - Step 2 of 3 of Payment Processing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREDIT CARD INFORMATION</th>
<th>CREDIT CARD BILLING ADDRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Card Number:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expires:</td>
<td>City:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name on Card:</td>
<td>State:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVV2 Data:</td>
<td>Zip:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Back... Continue...
System Implementation

- Worked directly with vendor
- Clearly developed and described processes
- Adapted NW Solar Communities checklist to online format for streamlined permitting
- Simple fee schedule (flat fee for residential)
- Linked with back-end internal permitting system: PermitTrax (http://www.bitcosoftware.com/)
- Application, permit issuance, and status/tracking can be done online
Streamlined Permitting

- Residential permits that meet checklist criteria are typically approved and issued within one day
- Follow-up inspections by Building Inspector and Fire Marshall
- Results have been very good: easy to apply and approve, and inspections have not revealed any problems
Numbers tell the story: Online Permitting Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total # of Solar Permits</th>
<th>Applied Online</th>
<th>Applied in Person</th>
<th>% Online</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
...in combination with Improved Permit Processing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total # of Solar Permits</th>
<th>Average Workdays to Issue</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

- Online permitting can greatly improve accessibility and ease of application
- Integration with internal permit tracking system is very important (essential!)
- If combined with process improvements can result in significant efficiencies and reduction in permit processing times
THANK YOU!

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Q&A – THANK YOU!

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www.nwsolarcommunities.org
CHANGES IN THE BUILDING CODE
Changes and Improvements to Solar Permitting Process

• Elimination of engineering calculations if solar PV systems meet certain requirements- IRC M2302
• Inclusion of Appendix U for “solar ready zone”
• Credits for energy code compliance using solar PV systems
Elimination of Engineering Requirements

- Solar PV systems may be installed on existing houses that meet the weight and height limits and meet the fire access requirements.
  - Saves the homeowner up to $2500 in additional costs
  - Can reduce project time by up to 8 weeks
  - “Over the counter” or online permits expedite the process
A New “Solar Ready” Appendix in the IRC*

- IRC Appendix “U” has been approved by the SBCC
  - Not mandatory but can be adopted by progressive jurisdictions
  - Reserves a zone on the house with solar access for future installation
  - Saves the homeowner money
    - No rerouting plumbing vents, chimneys or other obstructions at a later date
    - Location for production meter is reserved
    - A capped conduit is located in the solar ready zone for future wiring runs

*Effective July 1, 2016
Credits for Compliance with the Energy Code for Solar PV

- Installing a PV system qualifies for energy credits required by code.
- Expedited solar permitting process will reduce work load for building department staff.
- Reduces wait time for permit issuance.
Benefits of Online Permitting

• Easy accessibility for consumers
• Easy (maybe) for consumers to fill out and submit online
• Reduced staff time for jurisdictions
• Allows electronic tracking and record keeping for jurisdictions
• Ability to provide standardized forms across jurisdictions