



Grow Solar Wisconsin Streamlining Solar Permit Brief

Photovoltaic (PV) system installations must obtain permits from their local municipality. The permit (and inspection) process can be poorly defined, complex and time consuming, thus adding to system cost. The permitting process can add \$2,000 for an average sized residential system¹.

Each municipality usually has its own requirements, forms and processes. Municipalities' and inspectors' level of engagement in the solar system's permitting varies widely. Municipalities can improve the process by clearly communicating expectations to installers in the permitting and inspection processes and standardizing the process, forms and requirements.

Grow Solar Wisconsin Activities

Madison: The City will work with a regional group to identify permitting process issues, and best practices and then create a more standardized regional solar permitting process.

Marshfield: The City's Solar Permit Working Group is streamlining the permitting process while reducing unnecessary staff and installer time. The working group is working on:

- Developing a guidebook with step-by-step permitting instructions, checklists for permit applications and inspection procedures, templates for supporting documentation, etc.
- Creating an *Expedited Solar Permit* for smaller systems on code-built homes

Milwaukee: The City created a Solar Permit Working Group to review the current process and find opportunities for efficiency while optimizing staff and installer time. Milwaukee is working on several issues including:

- Providing instructions, permit applications, and contact information online
- Creating *Expedited Solar Permit* for smaller systems on code-built homes to receive same-day approval
- Developing a clear and concise fee schedule for installs
- Training of permit and inspection staff

Sharing results

Grow Solar Wisconsin will share the replicable models and program materials with other communities wanting to create more standardized and efficient solar permitting processes.

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¹ Based on study by SunRun, the found permitting and inspection costs of \$500/kW and assuming a 4 KW system.