

Department of Buildings

SOLAR EXPRESS - PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR PANEL PERMIT PROCESS OVERVIEW

There are 4 Department of Buildings (DOB) Permit pathways for the installation of photovoltaic solar panels depending on the scope of work:

1. Rooftop Small Installations – Easy Permit Process – Solar Express

For the installation (only) of a mechanically fastened, non- ballasted PV Solar Panel Array on a building rooftop where the array will be less than 13.44 KW (and meets the requirements of listed on page 4 of the Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines):

- The Easy Permit Process is administered at the EPP Permit Desk located in Room 906 at City Hall at 121 North LaSalle Street Chicago. (312-744-8678).
- The Applicant must be a Solar Contractor / Installer approved to participate in the Photovoltaic Solar Panel Program.
- For wood frame roofing systems - the Solar Contractor / Installer may complete and submit the Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheet or the worksheet may be completed by a Licensed in Illinois Architect or Structural Engineer. For steel or concrete roofs the worksheet must be completed, stamped and signed by a licensed in Illinois design professional.
- The Easy permit Application, Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheet and Electrical application will receive an expedited administrative review for completeness.

2. Rooftop Large Installation - Standard Plan Review Process – Solar Express

For the Installation (only) of a PV Solar Panel Array on a building rooftop where the array is larger than 13.44 KW or for ballasted PV panel installations on a flat roof:

- The Solar Contractor must be listed as the General Contractor for the Project.
- The Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheet or the worksheet must be completed, signed and sealed by a Licensed in Illinois Architect or Structural Engineer.
- The Licensed Design professional will submit the Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines, permit application and electrical permit electronically to the Department of Buildings Standard Plan process using the DOB E Plan / Project DOX Electronic Plan Submission System.
- The Standard Permit Application, Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheet and Electrical application will receive expedited administrative and expedited structural reviews from designated DOB staff. (No Zoning Review will be performed except for unusual panel configurations.) .

3. Rooftop PV Solar Panels Installed As Part of a New Construction Building Permit

For projects where solar panels will be installed on a building rooftop as one component of a new construction building permit for:

- a. A new building.
 - b. A building addition.
 - c. A major building remodeling or change of use.
- The Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheets must be completed by a licensed structural engineer and added to the other Structural documents and calculations submitted for the permit.
 - This permit will be submitted electronically to the Department of Buildings and reviewed by Zoning/Planning and will also be conventionally reviewed for all applicable disciplines (Architectural, Fire, Structural, Plumbing, Electrical etc.) as normal through either the Standard Plan Review process (SPR) or the Developer Services Process (DS).
 - However, the use of the The Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines worksheets will guarantee a faster more efficient review and approval for the solar panel component of the project.

4. Solar Panels Not Installed on Building Rooftops / Not installed on the Primary Building

For projects (only for the installation of solar panels) where the solar panels will be hung or mounted on to building walls, mounted as bris-de-solei awnings above windows, mounted on auxiliary building such as garage roofs or storage shed roofs, or mounted on ground structures such as poles, pylons and pedestals.

- The Solar Contractor must be listed as the General Contractor for the Project.
- The Licensed Design professional must submit plans, structural calculations, product literature and the permit application and electrical permit for the solar panel installation electronically to the Department of Buildings Standard Plan Review process using the DOB E Plan / Project DOX Electronic Plan Submission System.
- The project cannot use the The Photovoltaic Permitting Guidelines as these guidelines are only intended to be used for the installation of photovoltaic panels on a building rooftop.
- The project will receive a full administrative, zoning and structural plan review.

FOR MORE INFORMATION - PLEASE SEE THE PHOTOVOLTAIC PERMIT GUIDELINES – PAGES 2 - 3 (PERMIT PROCESS).