

Construction Industry Communication #40

From: Amit Ghosh, Chief Building Official
Re: Permit/Inspection Process – Photovoltaic (PV) Systems
Date: December 15, 2011

Requirements: The Ohio Building Code (OBC) requires all Building Services Equipment to be inspected per OBC 108.2.9. The Building Services Equipment designation encompasses those electrical systems located within or for use by building operations including any Photovoltaic Systems (PV) being installed. Additionally, Building Services Equipment are required to comply with the plan approval process as designated within OBC 107 and the inspection process designated within OBC 108 including any special inspections deemed necessary by the Chief Building Official per OBC 108.2.11 & OBC Section 1704.

Background: Due to the inherent nature of PV Systems necessitating the use of sunlight for optimum operation, the majority of this equipment is located in elevations that increase the hazards for inspections, requires specialized training and equipment to inspect safely and increases the time necessary to successfully complete. The City of Columbus has established procedures to comply with these requirements which will not adversely affect customer service levels expected by both the electrical industry and the citizens of Columbus.

Memorandum: The following shall be utilized for permit and inspection procedures for all PV Systems installed within the City of Columbus;

Plans sealed by a design professional registered in the State of Ohio are required to be submitted for approval in accordance with OBC 107 / RCO 106.

- The documentation within the expedited permit process for PV Systems will be required to be utilized for plans to be accepted for review, see link below. <http://brooksolar.com/files/Expermitprocess3.pdf>
- All standard plan review fees will apply as identified within the Building and Zoning Services (BZS) Fee Schedule.

An approved special inspector from the “Special Inspection Testing Agencies and Inspectors” list must be designated by the permit applicant to perform the required special inspections of the PV System.

Upon receipt of an approved plan review and a qualified special inspector, a City of Columbus electrical permit will be required to be obtained by the permit holder per CBC 4113.

- All standard electric permit fees will apply as identified within the BZS Fee Schedule.

Upon completion of all work identified within the approved construction documents, a special inspection will be required by the qualified special inspector.

- A City of Columbus Photovoltaic System Checklist will be required to be prepared by the approved special inspection entity verifying the installation to be in accordance with the approved construction drawings.

Upon completion of the above, the Photovoltaic System Checklist (Page 2) shall be sent to electricinfo@columbus.gov for approval.

PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM INSPECTION CHECKLIST

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 17 of the Ohio Building Code and Construction Industry Communication #40, the undersigned special inspector certifies the following list:

- Work was completed in conformance to the approved documents.
- All equipment is identified and listed for the application.
- All equipment is installed per the manufactures specifications and requirements.
- Installation is in compliance with Section 1512 of the Ohio Building Code, Article 690 of the National Electrical Code and all applicable referenced standards.
- Electrical permit is obtained by a registered electrical contractor with the City of Columbus.

Customer Name: _____

Job Site Address: _____

Date of Inspection: _____

Plan Approval Number: _____

Electrical Permit Number: _____

Special Inspector: _____

Company Phone Number: _____

NABCEP or PE Certification Number: _____

Signature of Special Inspector: _____

Revised 04/03/2026