



## Town of Kennebunk

### Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System Permitting Checklist

**In the Town of Kennebunk, all small-scale solar that is an accessory use to residential or commercial property are permitted by right.**

The permitting checklist below contains the minimum information and project plan details required to be submitted to Community Development when applying for a permit to install a residential and commercial solar photovoltaic (PV) system. The intent of using the checklist is to provide transparent and well-defined information to minimize the number of required revisions, improve permit application quality, and accelerate the application and review process.

#### 1. Required Permits

A permit must be obtained prior to the start of any work. Complete the Building and Electrical permit application form(s) and submit any additional required documents (see section 2 below). All required permits and forms can be submitted online using [Kennebunk's Online Portal \(linked here\)](#).

Residential Solar Small-Scale Solar PV Systems:

- Building Permit
- Electrical Permit

Commercial/Non-residential Small Scale Solar PV Systems:

- Building Permit
- Electrical Permit

Primary Use Ground-mounted Solar PV System:

- Building Permit
- Electrical Permit

\* Primary use ground-mounted solar systems will also need to undergo Site Plan Review and approval by the planning board. [View the Site Plan Review procedures here](#).

#### 2. Additional Required Documents

*Building Permit additional documents:* To complete the building permit you will be required to submit the following additional documents:

- Letter of Authorization: The Town of Kennebunk requires a Letter of Authorization from the property owner if the application is being completed by someone other than themselves. Any applications without the required Authorization will be returned as incomplete. [View a sample letter of authorization here](#).

- ❑ Site Plan: The site plan should show the location of major components on the property. The drawing does not need to be exactly to scale, but it should represent relative location of components at site.
- ❑ Engineered Plans: Plans should detail how panels will be mounted and where.

*Electrical Permit additional documents:* To complete the electrical permit you will be required to submit the following additional documents:

- ❑ Electrical Diagram: Electrical diagram/worksheets should show PV and energy storage system configuration, wiring system, overcurrent protection, inverter, disconnects, required signs, and AC connection to the building.
- ❑ Specification sheets and installation manuals (if available): Provide spec sheets and manuals for all manufactured components including, but no limited to, PV modules, inverter(s), combiner box, disconnects, and mounting system.

### 3. Codes and Design Criteria

In addition to the permit requirements described above, Kennebunk requires conformance with requirements of IRC 2021 Section R324 Solar Energy Systems, listed below:

#### IRC 2021

**R324.4 Structural Requirements.** Rooftop mounted photovoltaic panel systems shall be designed to structurally support the system and withstand applicable gravity loads in accordance with Chapter 3. The roof on which these systems are installed shall be designed and constructed to support the loads imposed by such systems in accordance with Chapter 8.

**R324.4.1.2 Roof Load.** Portions of roof structures not covered with photovoltaic panel systems shall be designed for dead loads and roof loads in accordance with sections R301.4 and R301.6. Portions of roof structures covered with photovoltaic panel systems shall be designed for the following load case.

1. Dead load (including photovoltaic panel weight) plus snow load in accordance with table R301.2.
2. Dead load (excluding photovoltaic panel weight) plus roof live load or snow load, whichever is greater, in accordance with section R301.6.

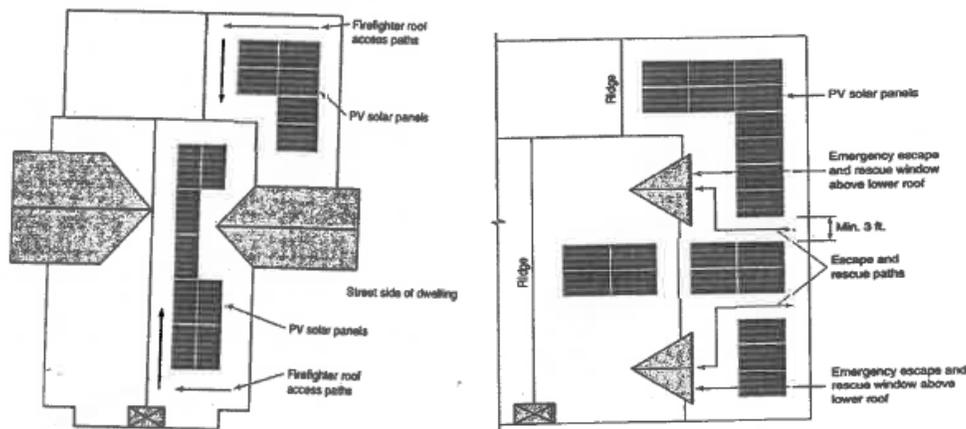
**R324.6 Roof Access and Pathways.** Roof access, pathways and setback requirements shall be provided in accordance with sections R324.6.1 through R324.6.2.1. Access and minimum spacing shall be required to provide emergency access to the roof, to provide pathways to specific areas of the roof, provide for smoke ventilation opportunity areas, and to provide emergency egress from the roof.

#### Exceptions:

1. Detached, non-habitable structures, including but not limited to detached garages, parking shade structures, carports, solar trellises and similar structures, shall not be required to provide roof access.
2. Roof access, pathways and setbacks need not be provided where the code official has determined that rooftop operations will not be employed

3. These requirements shall not apply to roofs with slopes of 2 units vertical in 12 units horizontal (17-percent slope) or less.
4. BIPV systems listed in accordance with section 690.12(B)(2) of NFPA 70, where the removal or cutting away of portions of the BIPV system during fire-fighting operations has been determined to not expose a fire fighter to electrical shock hazards.

**R324.6.1 Pathways.** Not fewer than two pathways, on separate roof planes from lowest roof ridge and not less than 36 inches (914mm) wide, shall be provided on all buildings. Not fewer than one pathway shall be provided on the street or driveway side of the roof. For each roof plane with a photovoltaic array, a pathway not less than 36 inches wide (914mm) shall be provided from the lowest roof edge to ridge on the same roof plane as the photovoltaic array, on an adjacent roof plane, or straddling the same and adjacent roof planes. Pathways shall be over areas capable of supporting fire fighters accessing the roof. Pathways shall be located in areas with minimal obstructions such as vent pipes, conduit, or mechanical equipment.



**R324.6.2 Setback at ridge.** For photovoltaic arrays occupying not more than 33 percent of the plan view total roof area, not less than an 18-inch (457mm) clear setback is required on both sides of a horizontal ridge. For photovoltaic arrays occupying more than 33 percent of the plan view total roof area, not less than a 36-inch (914mm) clear setback is required on both sides of a horizontal ridge.

**R324.6.2.1 Alternative setback at ridge.** Where an automatic sprinkler system is installed within the dwelling in accordance with NFPA 13D or section P2904, setbacks at ridges shall comply with one of the following:

1. For photovoltaic arrays occupying not more than 66 percent of the plan view total roof area, not less than an 18-inch (457mm) clear setback is required on both sides of a horizontal ridge.
2. For photovoltaic arrays occupying more than 66 percent of the plan view total roof area, not less than a 36-inch (914mm) clear setback is required on both sides of a horizontal ridge.

**R324.6.3 Emergency escape and rescue openings.** Panels and modules installed on dwellings shall not be placed on the portion of a roof that is below an emergency escape and rescue opening. A pathway not less than 36 inches (914mm) wide shall be provided to the emergency escape and rescue opening.

**Exception:** BIPV systems listed in accordance with section 690.12(B)(2) of NFPA 70, where the removal or cutting away of portions of the BIPV system during fire-fighting operations has been determined to not expose a fire fighter to electrical shock hazards.

#### 4. Process FAQs

*How do I submit my permit applications?*

All required permits and forms can be submitted online using [Kennebunk's Online Portal \(linked here\)](#).

*What is the permit review process timeline?*

The Community Development Department is committed to providing a timely review of Solar PV permit applications. Best efforts are made to review completed Small Scale Solar permit applications within 14 business days and Primary Use Solar permit applications within 90 business days due to review by the Site Plan Review Board and Public Hearing process. These turnaround times are typical for all permitting through this process, but are not guaranteed. Kennebunk has a staff of dedicated individuals, but workloads, vacations, and sick leave can cause unforeseen delays that may impact turnaround time.

Certain circumstances can prolong the permit turnaround time including:

- The application is not found to be complete
- Equipment is not listed
- Missing Letter of Authorization

*How do I check my permit status?*

To check your permit status please call Community Development at (207) 604-1303 or Hannah Watson, Town Planner at (207) 604-1312 and/or email [CPsecretary@kennebunkmaine.us](mailto:CPsecretary@kennebunkmaine.us)

*When does my permit expire?*

Failure to start the work authorized by a permit within this six-month period renders the permit invalid and a new permit must be obtained. Once work begins, noticeable progress must continue until completion.

*How do I schedule an inspection?*

To schedule a building inspection please call Community Development at (207) 604-1303. For the electrical inspection call the Electrical Inspector directly at (207) 985-2102 ext. 1604. We typically perform inspections Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 3:00pm and typically inspections are completed with 24-48 hours upon request depending on staffing.

*How can I contact Community Development about my project?*

Phone: (207)-604-1303

Email: [CPsecretary@kennebunkmaine.us](mailto:CPsecretary@kennebunkmaine.us)

In person: Kennebunk Town Hall, 1 Summer Street, Room 216, Kennebunk, ME 04043

- *Hours of Operation:* 8:00AM to 4:00PM Monday - Friday, with a late start of **9:00AM** every Wednesday.