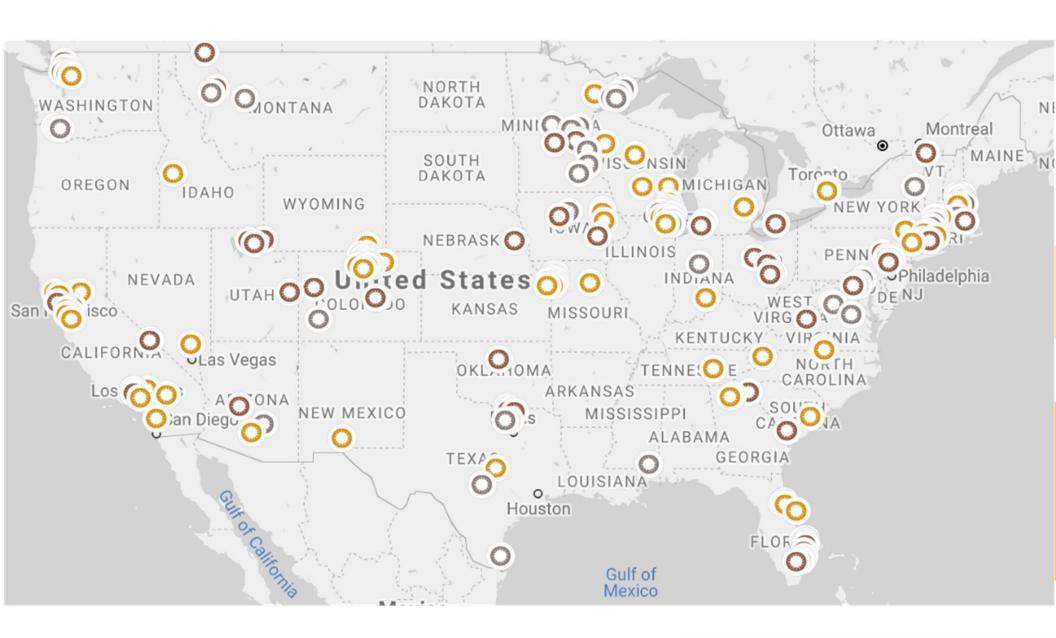
Simplified Solar Permitting Guidelines

Improving Permit Review and Inspection for Small Solar Systems

VA Training

Bill Brooks, Principal, Brooks Engineering

SOLSMART COMMUNITY MAP



SIMPLIFIED PV PERMIT GUIDELINES



- The information in these guidelines are intended to provide a format whereby local jurisdictions and contractors can permit simple PV system installations where only a basic review is necessary.
- It is likely that most residential and some small commercial PV systems will comply with these simple criteria that address the requirements for PV systems in the building, electrical, and fire codes.





- Eligibility List Defines the size, electrical, structural, and fire safety requirements for solar installations to qualify for simplified permitting.
- 2. Structural Review—Enable applicants to "fill in the blanks" to explain the structural details of a rooftop solar PV system.
- 3. Electrical Review—Enable applicants to "fill in the blanks" to explain the electrical configuration of a solar PV system.

CURRENT LAWS, REGS & CODES



This Guideline is not intended to create, explicitly or implicitly, any new requirements.

- NEC Article 690, 705, and chapters 1-4
- IRC R331, R902, R905, R908
- IBC 1505, 1509, 1511
- IFC 605.11
- ASCE 7-10, 7-16

SIMPLIFIED PV PERMIT GUIDELINES



Required Information for Permit:

- Permit application required by the local jurisdiction. Permit applications normally include information about the project scope, project location, and the installer.
- 2. Site plan showing location of major components on the property. This drawing need not be exactly to scale, but it should represent relative location of components at site (see supplied example site plan). PV arrays in compliance with IRC fire setback requirements need no separate fire service review (with Fire Service MOU).

www.solsmart.org

SIMPLIFIED PV PERMIT GUIDELINES



Required Information for Permit (cont.):

- 3. Electrical worksheets showing PV array configuration, wiring system, overcurrent protection, inverter, disconnects, required signs, and ac connection to building (see supplied standard electrical diagram).
- 4. Specification sheets and installation manuals (if available) for all major PV system components such as, PV modules, dc-to-dc converters, inverters, and mounting systems.

Purposes of Simplified Permitting



- A simplified, expedited permit process for small solar PV systems simplifies and consolidates the structural, electrical and fire review of the PV system
- It can eliminate the need for detailed engineering studies and often avoids unnecessary delays
- It is not the intent of an expedited process to circumvent the engineering process
- It is to recognize the similarities among these smaller systems and establish guidelines to determine when a PV project is within the boundaries of typical, well-engineered systems that are clearly compliant with electrical and building codes.

The "Box" to Qualify Simple Permits INDIANT CONTROL OF CONTROL OF

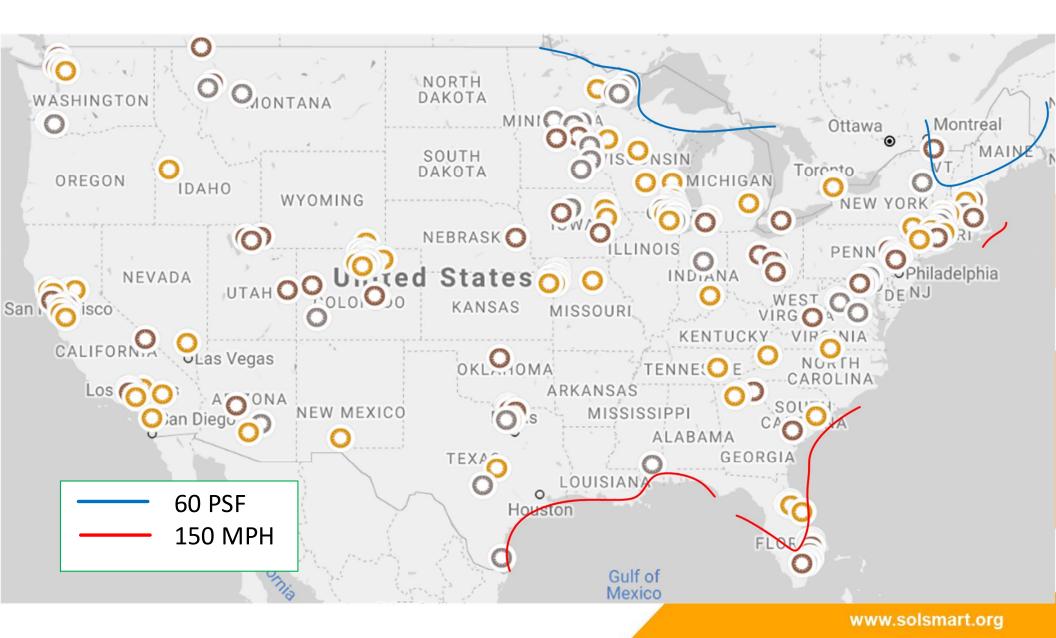
- PV system no larger than 15.36kW
- One- and two-family rooftop installations or structure of same construction.
- String inverter, dc converter, or microinverter
- Complies with eligibility checklist

Overall Limitations of Location

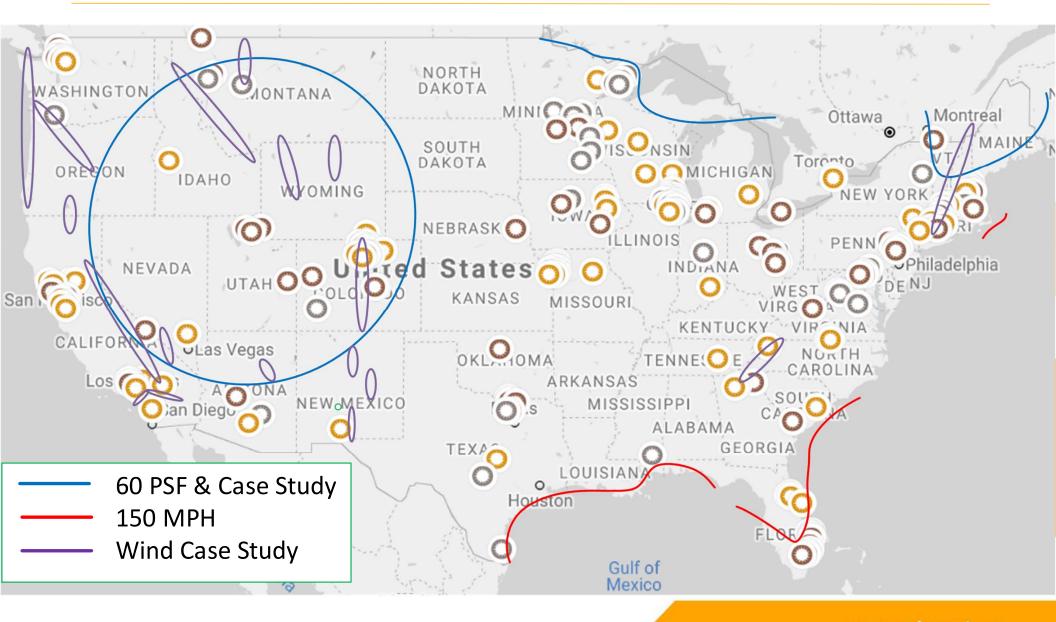


- Snow load no greater than 60 PSF (pounds per square foot).
- Wind load no greater than 150 MPH

Guidelines Cover Most of 48 States



Guidelines Cover Most of 48 States



Member Attached Limitations



- Snow load no greater than 60 PSF (pounds per square foot).
- Wind load no greater than 150 MPH
- Not Exposure D (waterfront)
- Not on steep hill (5% grade)
- Roof mean height 40' or less
- Roof structure meets IRC
- No structural damage

Member-Attached PV Array Requirements:

- 1. Array is set back from all roof edges and ridge by at least twice the gap under the modules (or more, where fire access pathways are required).
- \square 2. Array does not cantilever over the perimeter anchors more than 19".
- ☐ 3. Gap under modules (roof surface to underside of module) is no greater than 10".
- 4. Gaps between modules are (select one below):
 - a. at least 0.25" on both short and long sides of modules, or
 - \square b. 0" on short side, and at least 0.50" on long sides.

Member-Attached PV Array Requirements (cont):

- 5. Mounting rail orientation or rail-less module long edges:
 - a. run perpendicular to rafters or trusses, and attached to them

- 6. The anchor/mount/stand-off spacing perpendicular to rafters or trusses:
 - a. does not exceed 4'-0", and anchors in adjacent rows are staggered where rafters or trusses are at 24" or less on center

Member-Attached PV Array Requirements (cont):

- 7. Upslope/downslope anchor spacing follows manufacturer's instructions.
- 8. Anchor fastener is (select one below):
 - ☐ a. 5/16" diameter lag screw with 2.5" embedment into structural member, or
- ☐ b. fastener other than (a.) embedded in structural members in accordance with manufacturer's structural attachment details. Manufacturer's anchor layout requirements must not exceed the anchor spacing requirements shown in Items 5 and 6 above.

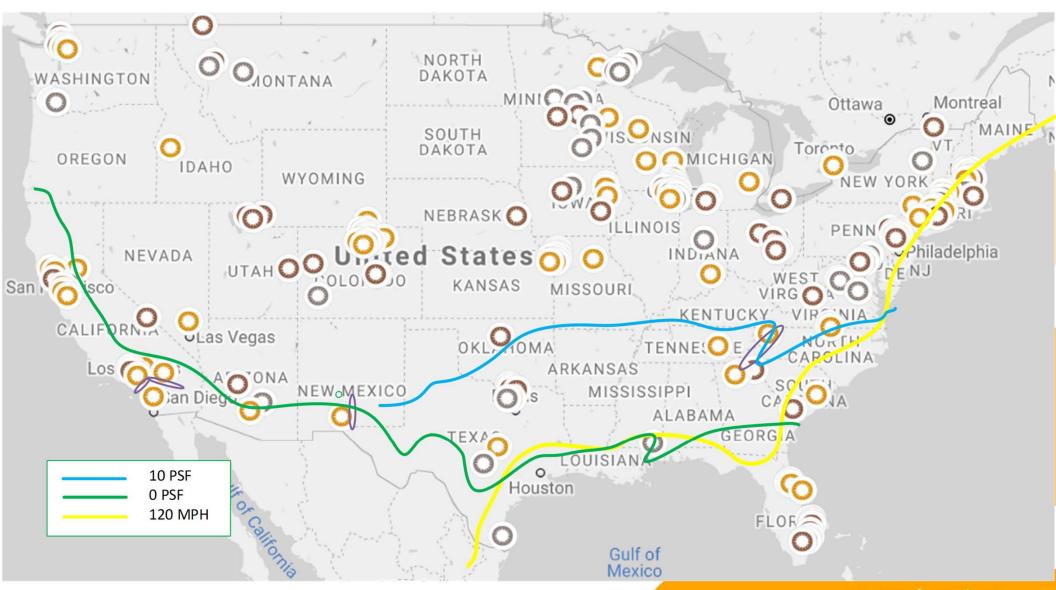
Structural Summary Takeaway



- 1. Houses that were built in compliance with building structural codes, can support PV.
- 2. Single layer of roofing (no second layer of comp).
- 3. PV modules mounted within 2" and 10" of roof deck.
- 4. PV array distributed weight less than 4 lb/ft²
- 5. Typical rafter with supports 48" apart or closer (each anchor row mounted on alternating trusses) meet structural code requirements (represents most of housing stock).

Options for Low Snow and Wind





Member-Attached PV Array Requirements (cont):

- ☐ 5. Mounting rail orientation or rail-less module long edges:
- □ b. run parallel to rafters and are spaced no more than 4'-0" apart, Ground Snow Load is no greater than 10 psf, and Design Wind Speed does not exceed 120 mph.
- 6. The anchor/mount/stand-off spacing perpendicular to rafters or trusses (select one below):
 - a. does not exceed 4'-0", and anchors in adjacent rows are staggered where rafters or trusses are at 24" or less on center (see Figure), or
 - □ b. does not exceed 4'-0", anchor layout is orthogonal, roof slope is 6:12 or less, Ground Snow Load is no greater than 10 psf, and Design Wind Speed does not exceed 120 mph, or
 - ☐ c. does not exceed 6'-0", anchor layout is orthogonal, roof slope is 6:12 or less, Ground Snow Load is zero, and Design Wind Speed does not exceed 120 mph.

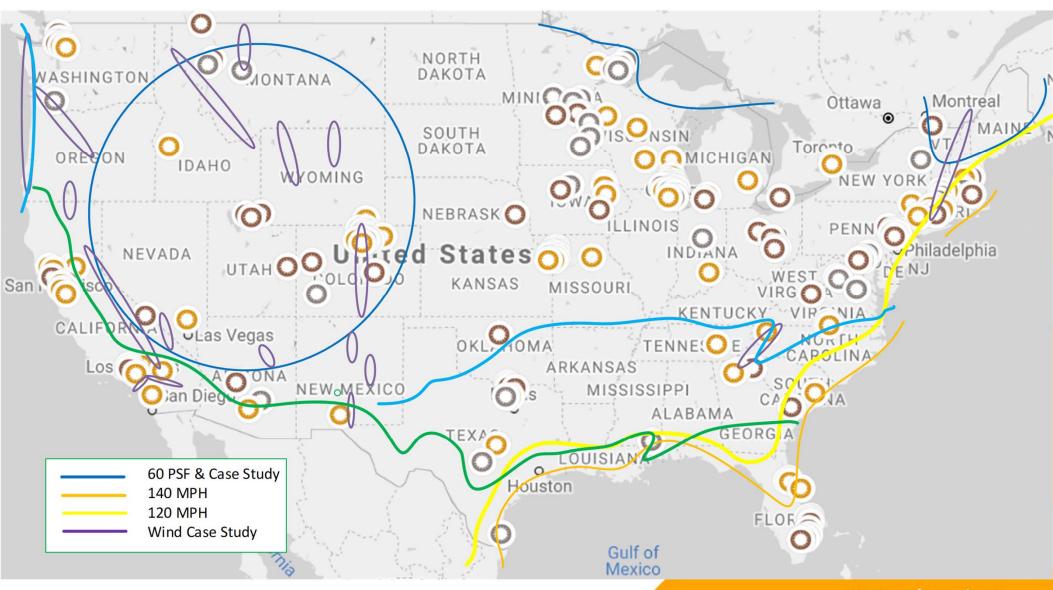
Sheathing Attached Limitations



- Snow load no greater than 60 PSF
- Wind load no greater than 140 MPH
- Not Exposure D (waterfront)
- Not on steep hill (5% grade)
- Roof mean height 30' or less
- Roof structure meets IRC
- Mfg Truss or Kiln Dry Rafters
- No structural damage
- Tributary area matters

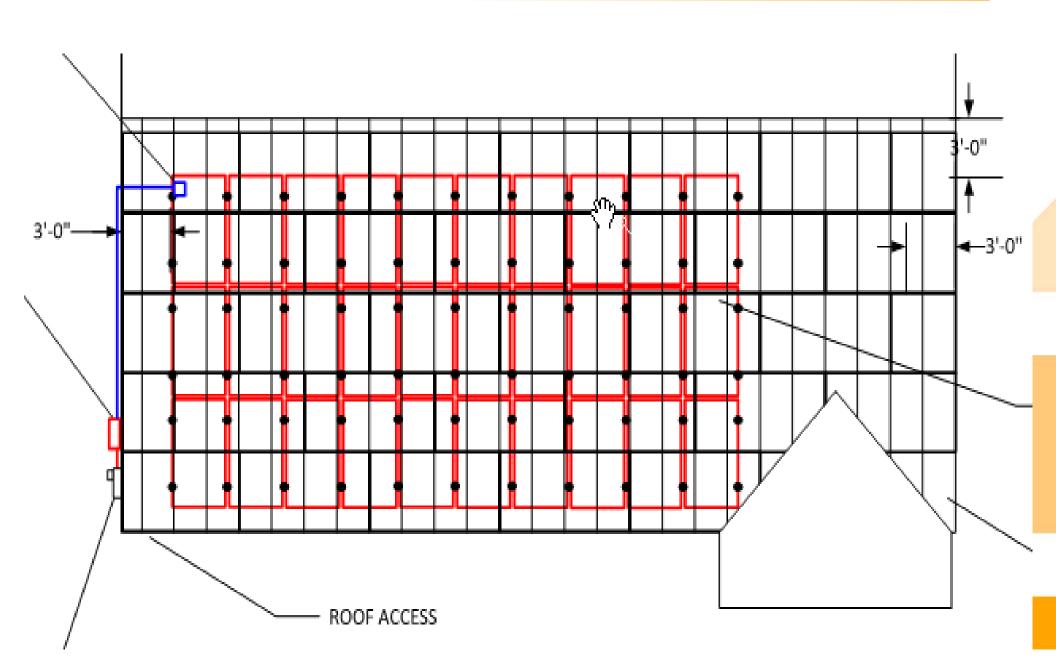
Options for Sheathing Attached





BANDS OF STRENGTH—Middle 16" of Sheet solsmart





ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST FOR SIMPLIFIED PV PERMITTING—Sheathing—No Bands of Strengton Delicition Delicition of Strengton Delicition Delicition of Strengton Delicition Delic

- a. Some anchors are <u>not</u> within bands of strength, and all the following (i., ii. & iii.) apply:
 - i. Edge of array is more than 3 feet from any roof edge (Wind Zone 1), and
 - ☐ ii. Tributary area is 9 ft² or less (up to half the area of a 60 cell PV module), and
 - iii. Wind Exposure B only, and design wind speed does not exceed 120 mph.

ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST FOR SIMPLIFIED PV PERMITTING—Sheathing—Bands of Strength

b. All anchors are within bands of strength, and all of the
following (i., ii. & iii.) apply:
☐ i. Edge of array is more than 3 feet from any roof edge
(Wind Zone 1), and
□ ii. Tributary area is 14 ft² or less (40″x48″).
☐ iii. One of the two wind cases below (x. or y.) applies:
\square x. Exposure B, and design wind speed does not exceed
140 mph, or
\square y. Exposure C, and design wind speed does not exceed
120 mph.

8. Anchor-to-sheathing connection has an allowable stress design (ASD) uplift capacity of at least 166 lbs. under short duration loading, which corresponds to a mean ultimate tested uplift capacity of at least 520 lbs.

GENERAL STATEMENT FOR CHECKLIST:

If any structural item cannot be checked off, the building official may require the installer to provide structural calculations and/or details, stamped and signed by a design professional, addressing the unchecked item.

Step 2: Electrical PV System Requirements Checklist

For a simplified PV permit, following are the electrical requirements:

- 1. Major electrical components including PV modules, dc-to-dc converters, and inverters, are identified for use in PV systems.
- 2. Array mounting system UL2703 certified for bonding and grounding. Alternatively, the array mounting system may incorporate UL2703 grounding devices to bond separate exposed metal parts together or to the equipment grounding conductor.
- 3. The PV array consists of no more than 2 series strings per inverter input and no more than 4 series strings in total per inverter.

- 4. Field Installed PV array wiring meets the following requirements (all boxes must be checked):
 - ☐ a. All exposed PV source circuit wiring is no smaller than 12 AWG PV Wire or MFG Cable.
 - b. All PV source circuit wiring in raceway is no smaller than 12 AWG THWN-2, XHHW-2, or RHW-2.
 - c. Any field-installed PV output circuit wiring is 6 AWG THWN-2, XHHW-2, or RHW-2.
 - d. PV system circuits on buildings meet requirements for controlled conductors in 690.12.
- 5. The total inverter capacity has a continuous ac power output 15,360 Watts or less and meets the requirements of 705.12(B) where installed on the load side of the service disconnecting means (complies with Table 705.12 in the Electrical Commentary). (choose one below)
 - Load-side connection complying with Table 705.12(B)
 - Supply-side connection complying with 705.12(A)

- 6. Equipment is rated for the maximum dc voltage applied to the equipment (put N/A in all blanks that do not apply to the specific installation):
- A. ASHRAE Extreme Annual Mean Minimum Design Dry Bulb Temperature (one source is www.solarabcs.org/permitting) = _____;
 Table 690.7 (NEC) value ______
- B. Max (temp adjusted) module Voc:

- C. Dc-to-dc converter(s) or microinverter rated maximum input voltage: _______V (must be greater than Max module Voc in (B.))
- D. Maximum number of dc-to-dc converters allowed in series (up to 600Vdc):_____
- E. Maximum voltage of dc-to-dc converter circuit with maximum number in(C.):________

Inverter(s) rated maximum input voltage:_____V (must be greater than 1)-4) below) 1) Inverter 1 input 1: Max module Voc (B.)_____V x # in series____ = 2) Inverter 1 input 2: Max module Voc (B.)_____V x # in series_____ 3) Inverter 2 input 1: Max module Voc (B.)_____V x # in series_____= 4) Inverter 2 input 2: Max module Voc (B.)_____V x # in series____ =

7. One of the standard electrical diagrams (E1.1a, E1.1b, E1.1c, or E1.1d) can be used to accurately represent the PV system.

Fill out the appropriate standard electrical diagram completely. If the electrical system is more complex than the standard electrical diagram can effectively communicate, the project does not meet the requirements for a simplified permit application and additional information may be necessary for the jurisdiction to process the permit application.

Central/String Inverter Standard Plans



- Use this plan ONLY for central/string inverter systems with or without dc converters not exceeding 15.36kW on the roof of a one- or twofamily dwelling or similar structure.
- The photovoltaic system must interconnect to the load side of a 120/240Vac service panel rated 400A or less (80-amp PV breaker or less).
- Not intended for more than two inverters, or more than one dc combiner per inverter (non-inverterintegrated).

Example 1—7.6kW Central Inverter PV System

PV System Components

PV Modules

Qty. 27, 360W, American Solar AS360

Inverter

Qty. 1, 7.6 kW, American Inverter AI-7600

Mounting System

OmniRack ModMount 5.0; sheathing attached;

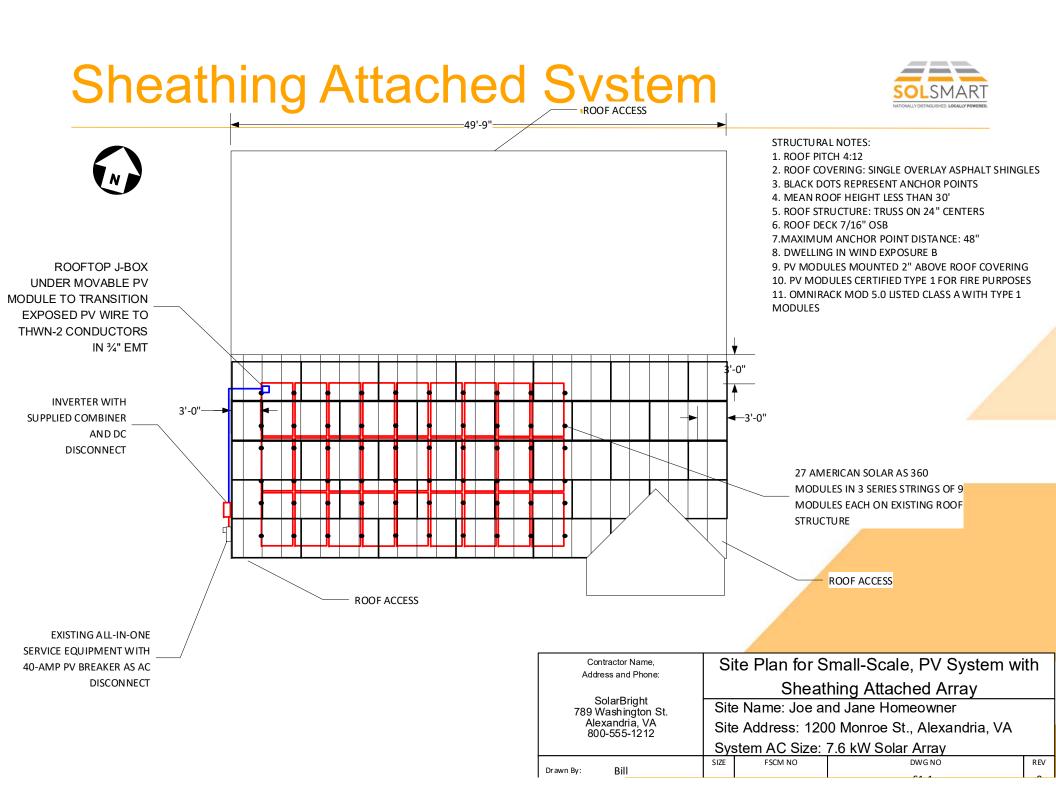
House

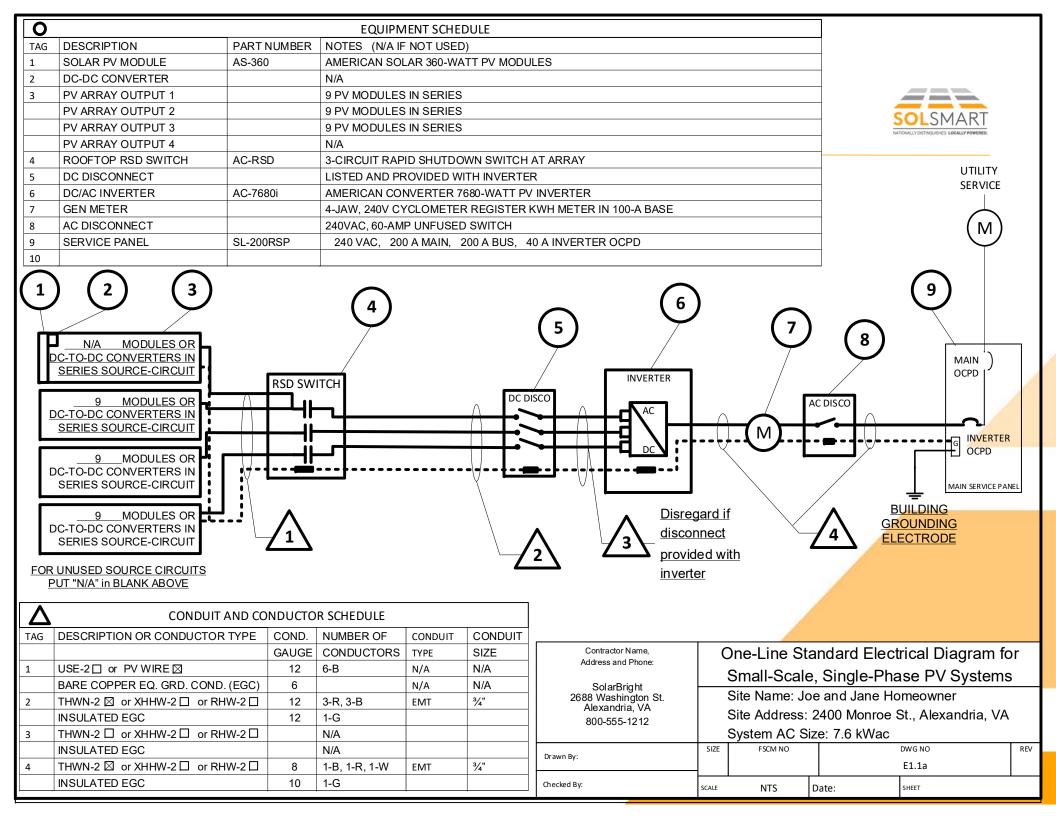
Roof Pitch 4:12; House built in 1988. Comp shingle roof. [structurally compliant]

Form Fill-Out Demonstration



Compliance Document
Standard Plan—Simplified Central Inverter
Structural Criteria—compliant





PV MODULE RATINGS @ STC

MODULE MAKE	AMERICAN SOLAR	
MODULE MODEL	AS-360	
MAX POWER-POIN	NT CURRENT (I _{MP})	9.1 A
MAX POWER-POIN	NT VOLTAGE (V _{MP})	39.4 V
OPEN-CIRCUIT VO	47.4 V	
SHORT-CIRCUIT C	9.7 A	
MAX SERIES FUSE	25 A	
MAXIMUM POWER	360 W	
MAX VOLTAGE (TY	1000 V	
VOC TEMP COEFF	-0.28	

NOTE FOR ARRAY CIRCUIT WIRING

LOWEST EXPECTED AMBIENT TEMPERATURE BASED ON ASHRAE MINIMUM MEAN EXTREME DRY BULB TEMPERATURE FOR ASHRAE LOCATION MOST SIMILAR TO INSTALLATION LOCATION. LOWEST EXPECTED AMBIENT TEMP __-12__°C

NOTES FOR ALL DRAWINGS:

OCPD = OVERCURRENT PROTECTION DEVICE

NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE® REFERENCES
SHOWN AS (NEC XXX.XX)

DC-TO-DC CONVERTER RATINGS (if used)

CONVERTER MAKE	
CONVERTER MODEL	
MAX CURRENT	
MAX VOLTAGE	
MAXIMUM POWER	
MAX OUTPUT CIRCUIT V (TYP	600V _{DC})

INVERTER RATINGS

INVERTER MAKE	Œ AMERICAN CONVERTER	
INVERTER MODEL	AC-7680i	
MAX DC VOLT RATING		600 V
MAX POWER @ 40°C		7680 W
NOMINAL AC VOLTAGE		240 V
MAX AC CURRENT		32 A
MAX OCPD RATING		40 A

*SIGN FOR DC DISCONNECT

PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER SOURCE			
MAX VOLTAGE	495 V	RT	
MAX CIRCUIT CURRENT	12.1 A	WERED.	
MAX OUTPUT CURRENT	N/A		

WARNING: ELECTRICAL SHOCK HAZARD-LINE AND LOAD MAY BE ENERGIZED IN OPEN POSITION

SIGN FOR PV SYSTEM DISCONNECT

SOLAR PV SYSTEM DISCONNECT		
AC OUTPUT CURRENT	32 A	
NOMINAL AC VOLTAGE	240 V	

SIGN FOR DISTRIBUTION PANELS

THIS PANEL FED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES (UTILITY AND SOLAR)

SIGN FOR NEC 705.12(D)(2)(3)(b) (if used)

WARNING: INVERTER OUTPUT CONNECTION; DO NOT RELOCATE THIS OVERCURRENT DEVICE.

SIGN FOR NEC 690.12 (for roof-mounted systems)

PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM
EQUIPPED WITH RAPID SHUTDOWN

NOTES FOR INVERTER CIRCUITS:

1) IF UTILITY REQUIRES A	/ISIBLE-B	REAK SWITCH,	DOES THIS	SWITCH MEET	THE
REQUIREMENT? YES ⊠	ΝОΠ	N/A □			

- 2) IF GENERATION METER REQUIRED, DOES THIS METER SOCKET MEET THE REQUIREMENT? YES $\hfill \square$ NO $\hfill \square$ N/A \boxtimes
- 3) SIZE INVERTER OUTPUT CIRCUIT (AC) CONDUCTORS ACCORDING TO INVERTER OCPD AMPERE RATING. (See Table 705.12)
- 4) DOES TOTAL SUPPLY BREAKERS COMPLY WITH 120% BUSBAR RULE IN 705.12(D)? YES \boxtimes NO \square

*NOTE: MICROINVERTER AND AC MODULE SYSTEMS DO NOT NEED DC DISCONNECT SIGN SINCE 690.51 MARKING ON PV MODULE COVERS NEEDED INFORMATION

Contractor Name, Address and Phone:	Notes for One-Line Standard Electrical					
SolarBright		Diagram for Single-Phase PV Systems				
2688 Washington St. Alexandria, VA		Site Name: Joe and Jane Homeowner				
800-555-1212	Site Address: 2400 Monroe St., Alexandria, VA					
	System AC Size: 7.6 kWac					
Drawn By: Bill	SIZE	FSCM NO		DWG NO	REV	
Billi				E1.2a		
Checked By: Ted	SCALE	NTS	Date:	SHEET	•	

Microinverter Standard Plans--Scope



- Use this plan ONLY for systems using microinverters or ac modules (ACM) not exceeding 15.36 kW, with no more than 4 output circuits, one PV module/microinverter, installed on the roof of a one- or two-family dwelling or similar structure.
- The PV system must interconnect to the load side of a 120/240Vac, service panel rated 400A or less (80-amp breaker or less).

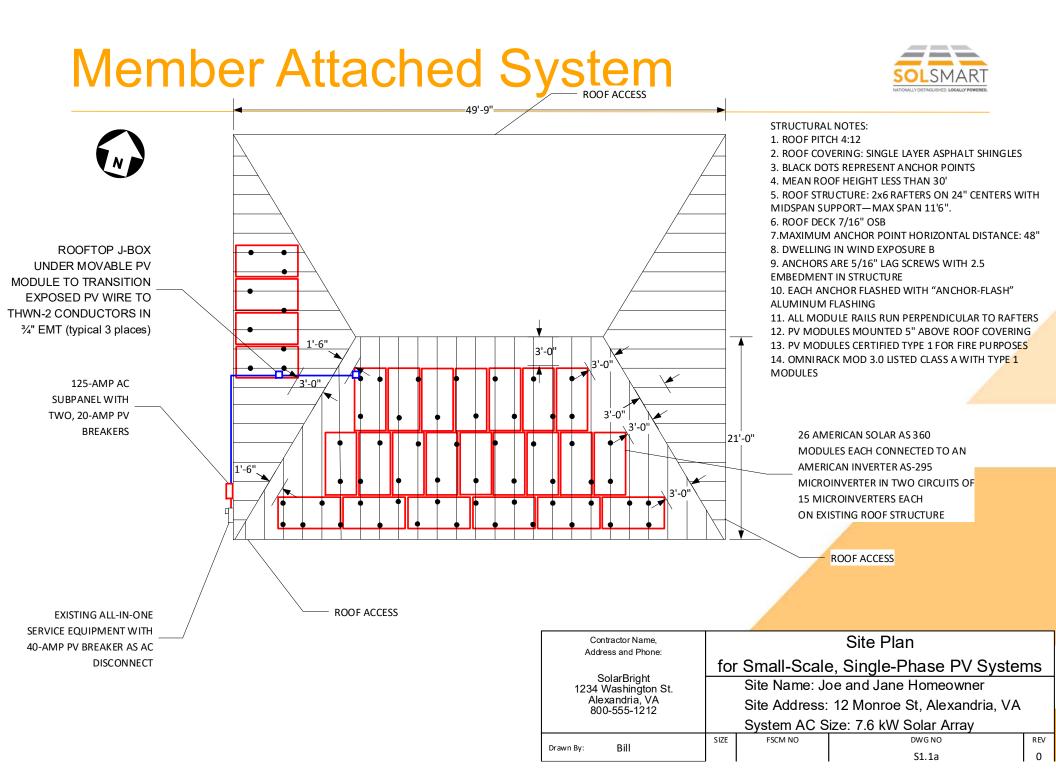
Example 2— 7.6kW Microinverter PV System

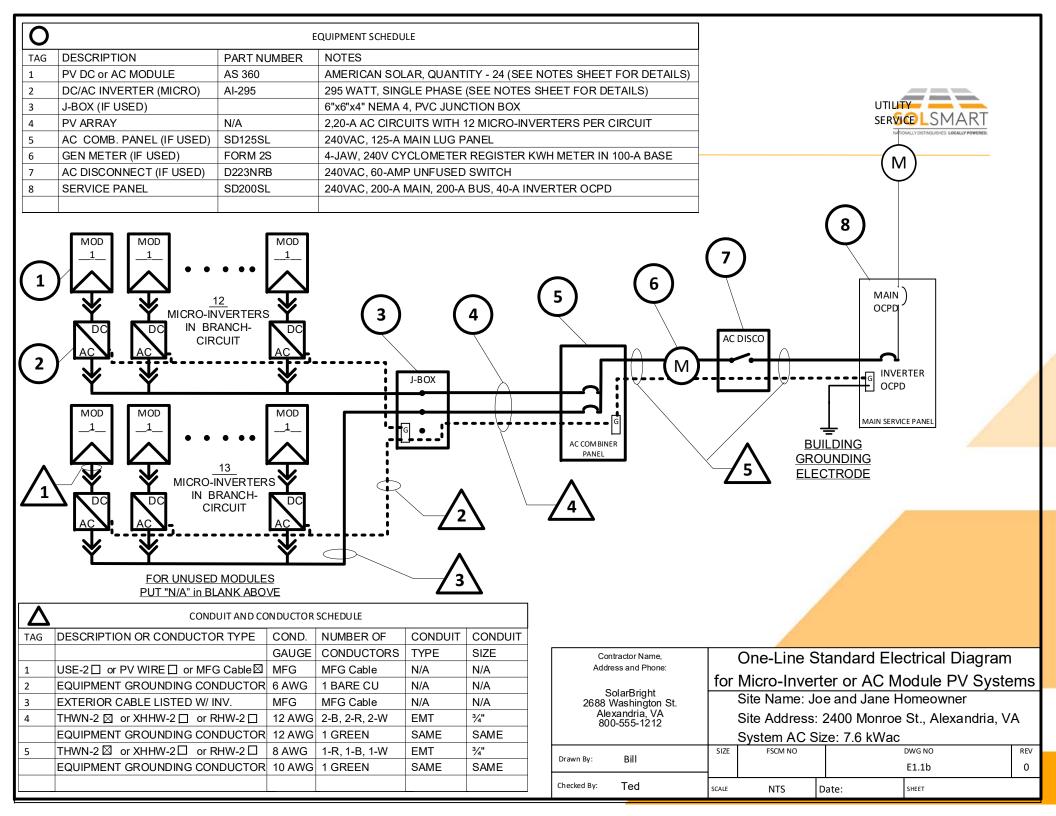
- PV System Components
 - PV Modules
 - Qty. 26, 360W, American Solar AS360
 - Inverters
 - Qty. 26, 295W, American Inverter AI-295
 - Mounting System
 - OmniRack ModMount 4.0; Maximum span 72";
 - House
 - Roof Pitch 4:12; House built in 1988. Comp shingle roof. [structurally compliant]

Form Fill-Out Demonstration



Compliance Document
Standard Plan—Simplified Microinverter
Structural Criteria (compliant)





PV MODULE RATINGS @ STC

MODULE MAKE	AMERICAN SOLAR		
MODULE MODEL	MODEL AS-360		
MAX POWER-POIN	NT CURRENT (I _{MP})	9.1 A	
MAX POWER-POIN	NT VOLTAGE (V _{MP})	39.4 V	
OPEN-CIRCUIT VO	47.4 V		
SHORT-CIRCUIT C	9.7 A		
MAX SERIES FUSI	25 A		
MAXIMUM POWER	360 W		
MAX VOLTAGE (T	1000 V		
VOC TEMP COEFF	-0.28		

NOTE FOR ARRAY CIRCUIT WIRING

LOWEST EXPECTED AMBIENT TEMPERATURE BASED ON ASHRAE MINIMUM MEAN EXTREME DRY BULB TEMPERATURE FOR ASHRAE LOCATION MOST SIMILAR TO INSTALLATION LOCATION. LOWEST EXPECTED AMBIENT TEMP__-12__ °C

NOTES FOR ALL DRAWINGS:

OCPD = OVERCURRENT PROTECTION DEVICE

NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE® REFERENCES
SHOWN AS (NEC XXX.XX)

DC-TO-DC CONVERTER RATINGS (if used)

CONVERTER MAKE		
CONVERTER MODEL		
MAX CURRENT		
MAX VOLTAGE		
MAXIMUM POWER		
MAX OUTPUT CIRCU	JIT V (TYP 600V _{DC})	

INVERTER RATINGS

INVERTER MAKE	R MAKE AMERICAN CONVERTER	
INVERTER MODEL	AC-295i	
MAX DC VOLT RATING		80 V
MAX POWER @ 40°C		295 W
NOMINAL AC VOLTAGE		240 V
MAX AC CURRENT		1.23 A
MAX OCPD RATING		20 A

Checked By:

Ted

NOTES FOR INVERTER CIRCUITS:

1) IF UTILITY REQUIRES A	VISIBLE-E	BREAK SWITCH, DO	DES THIS S	WITCH MEET	THE
REQUIREMENT? YES ⊠	ΝОΠ	N/A □			

- 2) IF GENERATION METER REQUIRED, DOES THIS METER SOCKET MEET THE REQUIREMENT? YES $\hfill\Box$ NO \hfill N/A \boxtimes
- 3) SIZE INVERTER OUTPUT CIRCUIT (AC) CONDUCTORS ACCORDING TO INVERTER OCPD AMPERE RATING. (See Table 705.12)
- 4) DOES TOTAL SUPPLY BREAKERS COMPLY WITH 120% BUSBAR RULE IN 705.12(D) YES \boxtimes $\:$ NO \square

*SIGN FOR DC DISCONNECT

PHOTOVOLTAIC POWER SOURCE					
MAX VOLTAGE	V	RT			
MAX CIRCUIT CURRENT	А	WERED.			
MAX OUTPUT CURRENT	А				

WARNING: ELECTRICAL SHOCK HAZARD-LINE AND LOAD MAY BE ENERGIZED IN OPEN POSITION

SIGN FOR PV SYSTEM DISCONNECT

SOLAR PV SYSTEM DISCONNECT						
NOMINAL AC VOLTAGE	240 V					

SIGN FOR DISTRIBUTION PANELS

THIS PANEL FED BY MULTIPLE SOURCES (UTILITY AND SOLAR)

SIGN FOR NEC 705.12(D)(2)(3)(b) (if used)

WARNING:
INVERTER OUTPUT CONNECTION;
DO NOT RELOCATE THIS
OVERCURRENT DEVICE.

SIGN FOR NEC 690.12 (for roof-mounted systems)

SHEET

PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM
EQUIPPED WITH RAPID SHUTDOWN

*NOTE: MICROINVERTER AND AC MODULE SYSTEMS DO NOT NEED DC DISCONNECT SIGN SINCE 690.51 MARKING ON PV MODULE COVERS NEEDED INFORMATION

Date:

Contractor Name, Address and Phone:	Notes for One-Line Standard Electrical				
SolarBright	Diagram for Single-Phase PV Systems				
SolarBright 2688 Washington St. Alexandria, VA	Site Name: Joe and Jane Homeowner				
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	System AC Size: 7.6 kWac				
awn By: Rill	SIZE	FSCM NO	DWG NO	REV	
By: Bill			E1.2a		

NTS

SCALE