



GOING SOLAR IN BOSTON

A REFERENCE GUIDE TO THE PERMIT PROCESS



Thank you for considering the installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) system on your residential rooftop. To help streamline the process click on the [Mass Clean Energy Center - Residential Solar Permitting Guide](#). This guide includes all the basics to get you familiar with going solar, including costs, economic/tax benefits, environmental benefits, sizing, regulations, and other general information.

STEP 1: BEFORE YOU APPLY

If you live in Boston, it is important to consider the following information. This information will help prevent potential challenges before you **begin** the process to install solar (photovoltaic) panels on your home or property.

1) Do I live in the Eversource “Area Network”?

You may live in the Eversource **Area Network**, a region where solar panel interconnection to the electricity distribution grid may be problematic. Certain homes within the following zip codes may be located in the Area Network: 02108, 02109, 02110, 02111, 02113, 02114, 02115, 02116, 02118, 02199, 02203, 02215, 02222. We encourage **all Boston residents** to call their utility before starting the process to install solar (photovoltaic) panels on your home or property.

- All Eversource customers **must** call 1-800-340-9822 or email EMDG@eversource.com to confirm that their property is suitable for solar **before** you begin working with a solar installer. (Solar installers will not know if you live within Eversource’s Area Network.)

2) Do I live in a historical district as defined by the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC)?

Solar projects in historic areas must be approved to receive a building permit. You can determine if your building is designated a Landmark or within a historic district by visiting the [BLC landmarks web page](#) and searching the building’s address in the [Interactive Map](#). Property owners interested in building a solar system in a historic district or on a designated landmark building should review the standards for the district or call the Boston Landmarks Commission at 617-635-3850 before starting the process to install solar (photovoltaic) panels on your home or property.

STEP 2: OBTAINING RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

All solar (PV) installation projects must be reviewed by the Boston Inspectional Services Division (ISD). When proposing a solar project, you must complete an application. There are separate applications for buildings between 1-3 units and buildings with 4 or more units.

If you have questions about the solar PV permitting process, call ISD at 617-635-5300.

If installing on a 1-3 unit residential building - Solar PV Project Application Process

- Please review the link to our [short-form permit system web page](#). Follow the three steps that eventually lead you to the [short-form permit application online](#). After creating an account and identifying the address where your project takes place, check the “electrical permit” box and continue your application.

If installing on a 4 or more unit residential building - Solar PV Project Application Process

- Please review the link to our [long-form permit system web page](#). Follow the three steps that guide you to the [permit application online](#). After creating an account and identifying the address where your project takes place, check the “electrical permit” box and continue your application.

Important to note: All solar (PV) projects must apply for an electrical permit. Only an electrician with a valid electrician’s license and identification may complete an electrical permit application.

GOING SOLAR IN BOSTON - CHECKLIST

Before starting the process to install solar (photovoltaic) panels to your home or property in Boston, be sure to:

- Check to see if your property is in the Eversource Area Network.
- Check to see if your property is in a historic district or is a designated or pending Landmark.
- Obtain a building permit through the Inspectional Services Division (ISD).

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Eversource: 1-800-340-9822
- Boston Landmarks Commission: 617-635-3850
- ISD: 617-635-5300