



New Residential Development Solar Requirements

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES
707 Nevada Street, Suite 5 Susanville, CA 96130-3912
(530) 251-8269 (530) 251-8373 (fax)
www.co.lassen.ca.us.

NEW FOR 2019 CODES – NEW HOUSES REQUIRE A SOLAR (PV) SYSTEM

Summary:

Changes to the 2019 California Energy Code mandate that all newly constructed single-family dwellings shall be provided with a minimum capacity for solar electric generation. This is typically achieved by installing solar panels (PV system) on your home. There are two options when designing your home to meet the 2019 CA Energy Code standards:

- **Prescriptive Approach:** Using this approach, the 2019 Energy Code specifically mandates a series of requirements that must be met on all new homes. A standard level of energy efficiency is prescribed, and there is little design flexibility in using this method.
- **Performance Approach:** A performance approach allows a designer more freedom. Typically, energy compliance software is utilized to meet code requirements. Using this method, the level of energy efficiency for your home must meet or exceed the energy efficiency level established by the Prescriptive Approach.

Highlighted below are key points to each approach. (*It is recommended that you discuss these requirements with your engineer or architect prior to submittal of your construction documents)

PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH

Newly constructed single-family dwellings shall have a PV system meeting the requirements of CENC 150.1(c) 14.

- The only code provision which will completely exempt a new home from requiring a solar system is if the majority of the home's roof area is blocked by natural or manmade barriers, such as rocky terrain, dense trees, or tall buildings. Typically, this exemption only applies to certain areas of California.
- To determine the required PV system size a new home will require, a formula is utilized. The formula uses factors such as construction location, conditioned floor area of the house, and number of dwelling units on the parcel. See Equation 150.1-C of the Energy Code.

PERFORMANCE APPROACH

Newly constructed single-family dwellings utilizing the Performance Approach shall separately comply with the Energy Efficiency Design Rating and total EDR rating. An energy consultant is generally utilized for this approach, and detailed design inputs and outputs are presented in an energy compliance report developed by software.

- A battery storage system compliant with Joint Appendix JA12 allows for PV size reduction by 25%. See CENC 150.1(b)1.
- In order to qualify for a battery storage system reduction, the battery storage system must be certified by the Energy Commission.

Additional Note: Tract homes and multifamily buildings that can meet one of the exemptions of Section 150.1(c)14 will still need to comply with Solar Ready provisions of Section 110.10. The requirements for a solar ready building include a "solar zone", reserved locations for interconnection pathways, and minimum ampacity of the electrical main service panel.