



Solar Panels

Information Guide

May 2023



About

Are you considering installing solar panels (solar photovoltaic) on your property? The following is a collection of Frequently Asked Questions to consider before beginning installation.

Refer to [Section 2: General Regulations](#) in the Land Use Bylaw to find some foundation information.

If you require further clarification, please fill out an [inquiry form](#) on the Town of Canmore's Planning and Development webpage.

Key Terms

Building Permit

A document/approval issued by the Safety Codes Officer (SCO) which authorizes the construction of a new building, structure, or to demolish, relocate, repair, alter or make additions to an existing building.

Development Permit

A document/approval issued by the Development Authority pursuant to the Land Use Bylaw (LUB), which authorizes a development and includes plans and conditions of approval.

Electrical Permit

A permit that is issued by a certified SCO who is accredited to inspect electrical work for a development. **Note:** *The Town of Canmore is only accredited in the building discipline and is therefore unable to issue electrical permits. Electrical permits must be sourced via a third-party accredited agency.*

Flush Mount Solar Panels

Solar panels that run parallel to the roofline of a building. They are fixed and do not change the overall appearance of the roofline.



Key Terms (continued)

Upstand Mount (Vertical Roof Mounts)

Solar panels that require a structure to support the panel(s) in an upright angle, which is typically steeper than the angle of the building roofline.



Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a development permit to install solar panels?

Solar photovoltaic systems will require a development permit if they do not follow the Land Use Bylaw regulations as outlined under *Section 2.11 - Energy Collection and Storage Devices*:

2.11 ENERGY COLLECTION AND STORAGE DEVICES

2.11.0.1 Energy Collection and Storage Devices that are attached to a principal or Accessory Building shall:

- a. Not extend above the peak of the roof;*
- b. Not project past a roof by 1.5 m at any point;*
- c. Have finishing colours on the device that fit into the range of appropriate roof colours described in Section 11: Community Architectural and Urban Design Standards; and*
- d. Not generate noise.*

2.11.0.2 Energy collection and storage devices that are freestanding structures shall:

- a. Meet the height and setback requirements for an Accessory Building within the district;*
- b. Not have a footprint that exceeds 6.0 m², footprint includes all solar panels or other attachments;*
- c. Have finishing colours on the device that fit into the range of appropriate roof colours described in Section 11: Community Architectural and Urban Design Standards; and*
- d. Not generate noise.*

2.11.0.3 Clotheslines are considered energy saving devices and shall be allowed in all districts.

If a development permit is required, this must be applied for and approved prior to a building permit application being filed.



Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

Do I need a building permit to install solar panels?

A building permit is **not** required when:

- The solar panels are flush mounted on an existing building and installed as per the approved installation guidelines.
- The solar panels are an integrated component of new building construction and planned to be inspected as part of the building approval/permit issued.

A building permit **is** required when:

- An Upstand Mounted system is being proposed. Where supporting structures for upstand mounted systems are required to be constructed as part of the installation, a building is required to approve and inspect the structural component of the panel.

Do I need an electrical permit to install solar panels?

An electrical permit is required for **all** solar panel installations. The Town of Canmore is only accredited in the building discipline and is therefore unable to issue electrical permits. Electrical permits must be sourced via a third-party accredited agency. For more information regarding accredited agencies in the area please visit the [Alberta Safety Codes Website](#).



Solar Incentive Program

The Town of Canmore offers an annual solar incentive rebate program for residents and businesses to help offset the cost of purchasing and installing a rooftop solar photovoltaic system in Canmore. For information and directions on how to apply, please visit our website, [HERE](#).



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