



Community Development Department

444 West Grand Avenue
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-2780
Ph: (715) 421-8225 • Fax: (715) 421-8291

Wisconsin Rapids Solar Permitting

Installing a solar project in the City of Wisconsin Rapids requires obtaining the necessary permits from the City's Community Development Department. Permits will vary depending on the project. Community Development is open 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. to 1 p.m., Monday-Friday or by appointment. They are located on the second floor of City Hall at 444 West Grand Avenue. Within the City of Wisconsin Rapids the local power company is the Wisconsin Rapids Water Works and Lighting Commission (WRWWLC) who does have their own process and this sheet does not explain their requirements in full.

General Permitting and Inspection Process

- Installer must have the proper state licensing – this may include electrical, building or alternative energy licensing. In addition to licensing it may be required for the contractor to provide proof of insurance prior to requesting a permit.
- Installer completes the Residential Bldg Remodel/Repair or Commercial Bldg Alteration building permit application form. Forms are available on the City website at <http://tinyurl.com/y942s8n5> The form is submitted to the Community Development Department with the proper permit fee and complete project plans. The fee for a solar project is \$7.50 per \$1,000 of project cost.
- Upon project plan review and verification of all necessary application items a permit will be issued by the Community Development Staff. Necessary items include:
 - Completed Application
 - Site Plan
 - Electrical Line Drawing
 - Typical time for the review and issuance of a solar power permit for systems less than 10kW is 3 working days or less.
- If any digging will occur as part of the solar project, Diggers Hotline should be contacted to locate any utilities a minimum of three days prior to starting the project. They can be contacted at 1-800-242-8511
- Upon completion of the project a final inspection will be performed by Community Development Staff. To schedule an appointment please call 715-421-8228. Ground mounted solar projects may require an interim inspection for footings.
- After completion, commissioning installer/responsible party must send completed Distributed Generation (DG) Interconnection Agreement to WRWWLC. Agreement form must be signed by the customer/owner. Forms may be found on the State's PSC website as well as the overview of PSC 119, which regulates interconnection. <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/ForUtilities/Energy/DistributedGenerationInterconnectionProcedure.aspx> The DG Application should be submitted in advance of project start. An overview of the Interconnection process can be found at <http://www.wrwwlc.com/interconnection/> For assistance please contact Shawn Reimer at shawn.reimer@wrwwlc.com or 715-422-9039.
- Installer makes commissioning appointment with a utility representative to obtain final power utility inspection and schedule change in meter before bi-directional unit. Installers do not pull meters.
- Project is commissioned and begins producing energy.

Best Practices

Here are some suggested practices that *may* help make solar easier, cheaper and safer:

- Submit Distributed Generation forms ahead of project completion to accelerate utility approvals.
- Minimize installer/contractor visits by planning ahead or coordinating same day inspections; such as with the City's final inspection and then the utility interconnection commissioning appointment.
- Have ready to sign at City final inspection any required utility forms/electric inspection certificates.
- Per electric code permanently and clearly label all required devices, including the AC Disconnect near the meter to improve visibility and safety.
- Always leave room for fire access, such as on the north roof slope to allow entry if there is a fire.
- Consider rooftop solar when getting a new roof. Have a feasibility study completed for both.

Solar Resources

Here are some solar resources that *may* be helpful in researching and learning more about solar:

- Wisconsin State Solar Access Rights. According to Wisconsin State law [\(60.61\(2\)\(j\)\)](#) an application for a permit will only be denied if; the denial is necessary to preserve or protect the health and safety, or an alternative system of comparable cost and efficiency would be permitted; and provided further that conditions may be imposed upon a permit if they:
 - Serve to preserve or protect public health or safety, or
 - Do not significantly increase the cost of the system or significantly decrease efficiency.
- Grow Solar. Grow Solar is a coordinated effort among Midwest organizations and municipalities to build an open and advantageous solar market that provides long-term benefits to communities.
<http://www.growsolar.org/power-pack/homeowners-small-businesses-farmers/>