

SO, YOU'RE INTERESTED IN USING SOLAR POWER IN WILMETTE – WHAT NEXT?

- 1. Do Some Research:** Find out more about solar energy at web sites like www.ases.org or www.illinoissolar.org. Click on Facts Sheets and Frequently Asked Questions. Click on “Links” for a full list of web sites to explore.
- 2. Find a Contractor:** Invite a contractor to do a site visit to see if solar power is an option for you. You can find a reliable contractor by visiting www.findsolar.org or www.illinoissolar.org and clicking on Sponsors.
- 3. Get a Plan:** Have your contractor provide you with drawings and a quote. Be sure discuss with your contractor what rebates and/or incentives are available through the state and federal government as this can bring the cost of your system down substantially.
- 4. Check with the Village:** Ask your contractor to contact the Community Development Department at Village Hall with any questions at (847) 853-7550 or comdev@wilmette.com.
- 5. Get a Permit:** Building permits are required for all solar installations. Generally speaking, the permit fee is based on the cost of construction and includes a plan review fee, inspection fees, and base electrical and/or plumbing fees. Allow up to four weeks to receive the permit, longer if the plan reviewers have questions and/or request corrections to the plans.
- 6. Install your System:** Most systems can be installed in 3 – 5 days depending on the complexity of the system.
- 7. Have an Inspection:** Your system must be inspected by the Village to make sure the panels have been installed in conformance with Village codes. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the manufacturer and installer to ensure that the system is installed properly and within the specifications of the equipment.
- 8. Enjoy Using Clean, Renewable Solar Power!**

FAQ'S ABOUT SOLAR POWER IN WILMETTE

1. Where can I put solar panels?

Most solar panels are installed on roof tops of homes or garages. However, they must not exceed the maximum height requirements - 35' on a single family home and 15' on a detached garage. For detached garages that meet the conditions that allow up to 18' in height, the panels may be installed on a roof if they are flush with the roof line. Panels that project out from the roofline of a garage meeting the requirements to go up to 18' may not exceed a height of 12' from grade.

If panels cannot be installed on your roof, you may install them on the ground. Panels must meet the front yard setback requirement (which varies from block to block) and the side yard setback. Awning mounts are also possible.

Please contact the Community Development Department at (847) 853-7550 or comdev@wilmette.com to discuss the specifics for your property and proposed installation.

2. What do we need to provide the Village of Wilmette in order to get a permit?

The Village requires two sets of drawings including a site plan showing where the units are to go and the setbacks to the lot line(s); electrical and/or mechanical drawings; and elevations of the structure (house or garage) where the panels are to be installed, showing height from grade to the top of the unit. A plat of survey must also be submitted. A building permit cannot be issued until all contractors are listed and licensed with the Village.

3. How long does it take to get a permit?

You should allow 4 weeks to get the permit, though it could be less. To ensure the fastest possible review time, please make sure to submit a complete application including two sets of drawings with the technical information and a site plan showing the proposed location of the units. The review time may take longer if the plan reviewers have questions or need additional information.

4. What if I need a zoning variance for my solar installation?

All effort should be made to design a system that does not require a zoning variance. If that is not possible, contact the Community Development Department to schedule a pre-application meeting with staff. The Zoning Board process typically takes two to three months from application to review by the Village Board.

5. For other general questions about solar energy, not specific to Wilmette, go to www.ases.org or www.illinoisolar.org and click on "Frequently Asked Questions."