

Inspections and Costs for Permits

After your application has been approved, the staff can assist you with scheduling your inspections. Inspections are scheduled within 48 hours of a successful applications acceptance.

- ◆ Ground Mounted Array–
 - \$50 Structural Inspection
 - \$200 Special Use Permit (If needed)
 - \$35-\$40 Electrical Permit
 - \$25 GIS
 - \$5 Reassessment
 - \$0 Septic Inspection
- ◆ Building Mounted Array-
 - \$50 Structural Inspection
 - \$200 Special Use Permit (If needed)
 - \$35-\$40 Electrical Permit

Note: Electrical Permits range in cost dependent on the amperage of the unit that is being installed. Additionally, refer to the latest fee schedule for exact cost.

After the electrical inspection has occurred, the electrical inspector will send a letter of approval to the electrical company, so a new meter can be installed, and the panels can be energized.



Elkhart County Zoning Appeals

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So You Want to Install a Solar Array in Elkhart County?

- ◆◆◆ A question and answer guide for where solar arrays are permitted, and how the permitting process works



“Focus on a long term commitment to economic vitality and efficient use of land while reflecting the highest professional standard with enduring regard for our customers and the public trust.”

Elkhart County Zoning Appeals

Tel: 574-971-4678

Website: www.elkhartcountyplanninganddevelopment.com

I want to get solar panels for my property. Where do I start?

The first step is to contact your utility company. Tell them what you are wanting to do, so they can let you know whether you will need a new meter, and any other specifics related to your utility usage. Furthermore, inquire about the application and approval process for interconnecting your solar panels to the grid.

Secondly prepare materials to apply for any required permits. You will need a site plan. When you are creating the site plan, there are three things that you need to take into consideration:

- ◆ Type of solar: (Building or Ground mounted).
- ◆ What are the setback requirements?
- ◆ Are there any recorded easements on the property?

Note: If you are not aware of the easements on the property, the land may need to be surveyed.

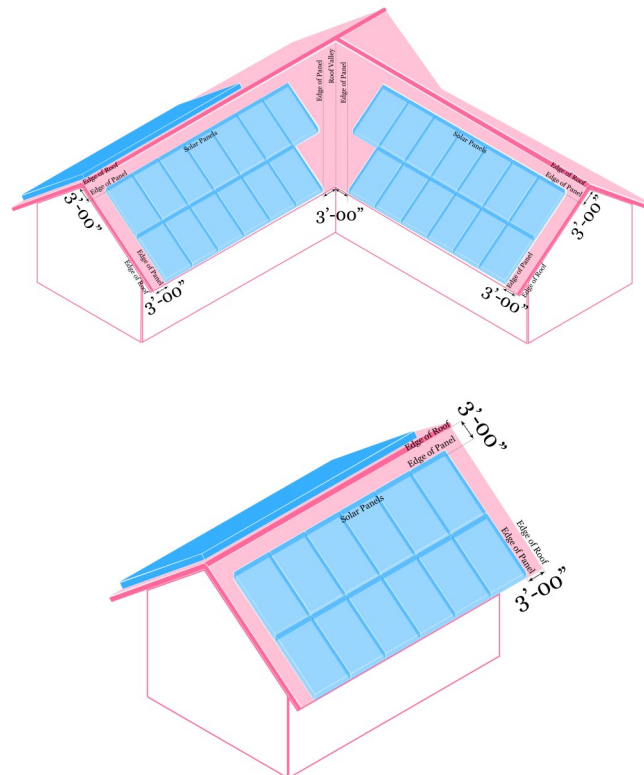
Setback requirements:

Both building and ground mounted solar arrays require setbacks. Building mounted arrays must comply with fire code.

Note: On the next panel, there are examples of roof mounted solar arrays. These demonstrate the maximum permitted coverage. The area on the roofs where there are no solar panels located they are not permitted due to the fire code. Roof mounted solar arrays can be installed on these types of roofs within the area permitted by code. Therefore, the solar array being installed may not cover this entire area. The renderings are designed to show the maximum permitted roof coverage.

Setback requirements for a ground mounted array	
Front Setback	>=50 ft.
Side Setback	>=5 ft.
Rear Setback	>=10 ft.
Required distance between solar arrays and other structures	>= 6 ft.

Note: If the property is unable to meet these requirements, they will need to file for a variance. Contact the planning department to learn more or see the Use Variance & Developmental Variance Pamphlet



Do I need to apply for a Special Use Permit?

Building mounted solar arrays are allowed by right; however, commercial arrays may require approval from a certified architect or engineer.

Ground mounted solar arrays vary. It depends on the square footage of the array, and the size of the property. There is a table on the next page that shows when a special use permit is needed.

Size of Ground-Mounted Array	Property Size	Is a Special Use Permit Needed?
Greater than 850 sq. ft.	Any sized Property	Yes
Any sized array	Less than 3 acres	Yes
850 sq. ft. or less	3 acres or more	No, permitted by right as long as it meets setback requirements for an accessory structure

Next Steps

Now, you can come to the planning department, and submit your application while obtaining permits.

If you need a Special Use Permit, you can learn how to apply for it at the planning department.