

===== From: "Request for Clarifications, 5-27-23" =====

Date: 06/08/23

Distribution: Irene Hawkins, Beth, LAHD, DWP: Jeff Owens & Solar Hotline, LA City Planning Office, LA City Code Inspectors: Hernandez & Reichmann, AFJ Investment, Others

Subject: Request for rules on solar electric for renters in Los Angeles buying their own panels

Attachments: Block diagram with pics of some proposed solar components

Summary: I'm looking for City/County/State/DWP rules governing the use of portable solar panels, owned by me, to be placed in and around the 500 sq ft bungalow I rent in Los Angeles. I want to know what I can and cannot do and what, if anything, I need landlord approval for. I'd like guidance in writing.

Hi,
I want to use several solar panels I own to generate electricity for my bungalow, both for my own use (running appliances and lights, storing energy in a battery for nighttime use) and to demonstrate to customers of my solar business. Use would be subject to the following restrictions:

1. No connection to bungalow electrical wiring.
2. No connection to grid.
3. No modifications whatever to bungalow structure.
4. Panels placed outside during the day, brought indoors at night.
5. Up to a dozen panels. Mostly small, 80W, measuring 2.5'x3'; with 1 or 2 of 315W, measuring 3'x5.5'.
6. No cables placed where someone could trip over them.
7. No high voltage present on any cable.

Given the above restrictions, which of the following are allowed:

1. Portable panel(s) placed entirely inside windows?
2. Portable panel(s) placed outside window and/or hanging from window sill?
3. Portable panel(s) placed on porch or steps leading into bungalow?
4. Portable panel(s) placed on lawn?
5. Portable panel(s) placed on roof, though not fixed to roof?
6. Portable panel(s) placed vertically against wall on side of bungalow?

Are there rules, published by the relevant authorities, understandable to the layman, governing use of "portable solar panels" by renters? Are there incentives made available by City/County/State/DWP to encourage use of solar panels owned by renters?

Some rental agreements expressly prohibit certain solar installations, including portable systems, mine does not.

(signed)

Bergendahl/Berg (as in Nuremberg; not Burg, as in *ein feste Burg*)/Bergie Hawkins, tenant, 2626 S Cochran Ave, Los Angeles, 90016

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===== From: "Notes, 5-27-23" =====

to install small DIY portable solar panels.

If you cannot convince your landlord to install a solar system, portable solar panels are another possibility.

When you think of a solar power system, you're probably thinking about huge solar panels installed on a rooftop. But there are many types of solar panel systems available, including portable systems. Portable solar kits come in many sizes, and you can set them up pretty much anywhere with sun exposure.

Portable solar systems can efficiently work in an apartment or rental property. For example, you can set up small solar kits on balcony railings, window sills, and even banisters. You can also connect the system to a battery to store extra electricity generated during the day and use it anytime you want.

Unfortunately, portable solar panels generate less power than traditional rooftop or ground-mounted solar power systems. A portable solar system typically produces 0.3 to 1.5 kWh of electricity per day, just enough to operate some small appliances and recharge electronics. This means that you will still need to rely on the electricity grid to power the rest of your home.

Note: Some rental agreements expressly prohibit certain solar installations, including portable systems. Better safe than sorry — always check with your landlord before starting any solar project. Following Governor Gavin Newsom's signature, California passed AB 2316, the Community Renewable Energy Act. The law creates a community renewable energy program, including community solar-plus-storage, to overcome access barriers for nearly half of Californians who rent or have low incomes. "Temporary solar panels for renters" <https://hackernoon.com/200-for-a-green-diy-self-sufficient-bedroom-that-your-landlord-wont-hate-b3b4cdcfb4f4A> windowsill solar system bought off Amazon solves both problems at once: Renters don't need permission from their landlords to place things on their windowsill and rooftops if it's not altering the building, and it's a one-click Amazon purchase with no regulation as long as it's not tied to the grid (which mine is designed not to be). Two birds with one stone. This makes the solar buying process more like buying a consumer electronic. <https://www.treehugger.com/solar-panels-for-apartments-ways-renters-go-solar-5193018> Window solar isn't widely accessible yet for most residential customers. Look for this to change in coming years as products currently under development come on the market. <https://www.cnet.com/home/energy-and-utilities/yes-you-can-use-solar-power-as-a-renter/> Forty-four million households rent their homes. While these renters likely can't make major changes to their homes, they have plenty of options for saving electricity and money. They can seal up their windows, lower their water heater's temperature, unplug appliances and turn off their lights. But larger moves, like buying solar panels, are likely out of reach.

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<https://www.marketwatch.com/guides/home-improvement/solar-panels-for-apartments/> "solar incentives for renters" solar fed tax credit Portable solar panels offer an alternative to rooftop solar systems and don't require permission from your landlord to set up. You can place portable panels on an apartment balcony or window.

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<https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2022/08/31/california-lawmakers-pass-equitable-community-solar-bill/> AB 2316, the Community Renewable Energy Act The Community Renewable Energy Act was sponsored by the Coalition for Community Solar Access, and met with strong support from groups like SEIA, GRID Alternatives, Vote Solar, the Sierra Club, the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and more. Notably, investor-owned utilities, which serve over 75% of the electricity usage in the state, opposed the bill. Pacific Gas and Electric, San Diego Gas & Electric, and Southern California Edison all signed on in opposition to the bill.

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la times dated: March 31, 2022

SB 1385: It's also pretty well-established that going solar is easier for single-family homeowners with cash to spare than it is for lower-income families living in apartments. This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to create a new program offering financial incentives for solar-plus-storage systems that serve residents of multifamily housing units. The incentives would be available for multifamily housing that serves low-income families or is located in an underserved community — or a high-fire-threat zone where the combination of solar and batteries could help keep the lights on during a public safety power shutoff.

Author: Dave Cortese (D-San Jose)
Status: Referred to Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Sponsor: State Assn. of Electrical Workers

Approved by Governor September 16, 2022

AB 2316: Another solution that many clean energy advocates agree on is community solar — small facilities that serve renters and apartment-dwellers who can't install solar panels and homeowners who can't afford to. California hasn't offered much support for community solar, but this bill would change that, requiring the Public Utilities Commission to set up an incentive program.

- Author: Chris Ward (D-San Diego)
- Status: Referred to Utilities and Energy Committee
- Sponsor: Coalition for Community Solar Access

=Councilwoman (council pres) Nury Martinez, Chair of the City Council's Energy, Climate Change and Environmental Justice Committee: 213-473-7006====
Support for A B2316:

Asian Pacific Environmental Network
California Environmental Voters (formerly CLCV)
California Wind Energy Association
Clean Air Task Force
Coalition for Community Solar Access – Sponsor
Coalition of California Utility Employees
Environmental Defense Fund
Grid Alternatives
National Resources Defense Council
Sierra Club California
The Utility Reform Network (TURN)
Union of Concerned Scientists
Vote Solar

I've tried to do so in a manner which would satisfy everyone. Of the several individual and agencies I've contacted, not one has even suggested there might be reasonable solar options for renters, not one. With the exception of landlord Tiffany Anderson who once told me she did not care about the panel I had placed outside on the front lawn, a panel which had been there for over a year, claiming it was the City which required me to remove it. I now find I'm allowed the use of portable solar panels to generate electricity so long as I make no modifications to the structure and do not connect to the grid. Things which were never my intention and which I made plain to anyone I contacted.

====General Manager Hearing on 12-21-22: Hernandez "No visible signs of solar panels" what did he mean? =====
It was not until May, 27, 2023 that, finally making a cursory check on the solar options available to renters, I quickly and easily found there were several, with the applicable rules very reasonable. To my surprise, I found them to be far less onerous than I'd previously thought. Not smart.

==== From: "Comm log" =====

| 1st Contact | Org. | Contact |
|-------------|---|--|
| 05/29/23 | California Public Util. Commission | Kristina Abadjian kristina.abadjian@cpuc.ca.gov |
| 05/31/23 | LA councilwoman | H. Hutt |
| 06/01/23 | LAPL Central, business research librarian | Youngsil Lee business@lapl.org |
| 06/01/23 | LA Times | Sammy Roth sammy.roth@latimes.com |
| 06/02/23 | DWP solar | ssp@dwp.com |
| 06/01/23 | LA city council | Nury Martinez |
| 05/31/23 | LAPL, Rob. Branch librarian | Hillary Perelyubskiy |
| 06/01/23 | LA Law library | |
| | Asian Pacific Environmental Network | |
| | California Environmental Voters (formerly CLCV) | |
| | California Wind Energy Association | |
| | Clean Air Task Force | |
| | Coalition for Community Solar Access – Sponsor | |
| | Coalition of California Utility Employees | |
| | Environmental Defense Fund | |
| | Grid Alternatives | |
| | National Resources Defense Council | |
| | Sierra Club California | |
| | The Utility Reform Network (TURN) | |
| | Union of Concerned Scientists | |
| | Vote Solar | |
| 2022? | LA City Planning | Anacany Hurtado |
| | LA City Planning, Sawtelle office | |