

Date: 10/25/2013
From: Gary Ocher <gocher@comquestresearch.com>
To: GA SBCC (GA)
Subject: Solar rules

I recently installed a 6.9 Mw system on my home in Edmonds.

I would not have been able to do this under the fire setback requirements under consideration.

I urge you to adopt ALL of the recommendations that came from the technical advisory group, including an exemption from setback requirements when solar panels cover less than 40% of the home's roof area. Requiring most potential solar installations to get fire official review before proceeding would put undue hardship on solar contractors. It would seriously hurt sales in one of the few growing industries in the state. Systems would be smaller in size and many homes with multiple roofs would be unable to, cost effectively, install any solar at all. These fire setback codes may be appropriate for California, where they were developed without public or industry input, but our typical installation is far different from theirs. Our state is working hard to encourage solar energy use.

All public policy strives to balance risk and reward. I believe the risk here is far outweighed by the rewards.

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