

Date: 10/25/2013
From: Kendall Bodden <teambodden@yahoo.com>
To: GA SBCC (GA)
Subject: ICC Fire Code and solar energy systems

Dear State Building Code Council,

I am urging you to adopt all of the changes to International Fire Code Chapter 605.11 recommended by the Solar Technical Advisory Group ("TAG"). The TAG recommendations were generated by a working group of fire protection and solar industry leaders, and balance the needs of both groups. These recommendations provide fire code officials with needed flexibility in review of solar energy systems proposals. They will also allow homeowners with small roofs to effectively use their roofs to generate clean renewable energy (increasing the value of the home by reducing the utility costs to own the home). As a result of the TAG recommendations, the Washington State solar industry will be able to continue its growth creating valuable new jobs in our state, and fire professionals will have safe access to rooftops in the event of a fire. The TAG recommendations benefit the key fire code stakeholders: homeowners, fire professionals, and the solar industry. Everybody wins. The SBCC should fully adopt the TAG recommendations.

Without the TAG recommendations IFCC 605.11 will significantly restrict the ability of homeowners to make economic & energy efficient use of their property, which will in turn stunt the growth of the solar industry in Washington State. Two of the key fire code stakeholders will lose significant opportunities if the SBCC does not adopt the TAG recommendations. Local jurisdictions can always make their building code more restrictive if a TAG recommendation is not suitable for the unique characteristics of their jurisdiction. But local jurisdictions cannot make their codes less restrictive if the original version of IFCC 605.11 is too strict for their jurisdictions. Local jurisdictions are best suited to make these decisions on a case by case basis.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments. I hope you will fully adopt the TAG recommendations so that the building code can best serve all the people of Washington State.

Best regards,

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