

Date: 10/24/2013

From: Keith Kemp <keith@kemp.it>

To: GA SBCC (GA)

Subject: I support support categorical exemption from the proposed fire setbacks for rooftop residential solar electric system

I encourage 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 the 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. Please don't let firefighters' fears, of what "might" happen, kill our hard won strides to solarize the northwest and help save our planet.

My personal home has a 14kilowatt system that covers 100% of my electricity usage including heating, hot water, and 10,000 miles of driving my Nissan LEAF. My modest 1400 sqft rambler has panels covering the southern roof of the attached garage and east roof of the house. This leaves the north and west roof faces completely open for firefighter access. The new regulations would have drastically impacted my ability to get a 14 kilowatt system. I would have had to cover the west and likely the north as well costing more money to get the same output and in my opinion making the entire roof less safe for fire fighters as they would have to access it through the setbacks vs having entire roof faces open.

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