



NORTH CAROLINA LICENSING BOARD FOR GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Solar Panel Installation, Licensing & Permitting Guidelines

Over the past several years there has been a move towards renewable energy. Photo Voltaic Solar Panels has been a big part of this movement and particularly with solar panel installations on single-family residences. As this trend has evolved there has been confusion and misinformation in the marketplace about who can install residential solar panels, and did a solar panel installation require a licensed contractor and if so which one? Were permits required?

In a cooperative effort of the North Carolina Department of Insurance/Office of State Fire Marshal, the North Carolina State Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors, and the North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors, have produced a guidance paper entitled, '[Solar Panel Installation, Licensing & Permitting Guidelines](#)'. The cooperating agencies have worked together to address and alleviate any confusion that local permitting and inspections offices, electrical contractors, general contractors and the citizens of North Carolina may be experiencing.

General Contractor Related North Carolina General Statutes

North Carolina General Statutes N.C.G.S. §§87-1 and 87-1.1 define general contracting and provide an exception for licensees under Article 2 or 4 of this Chapter.

A building permit is required for any project, including SPVP installations at a cost of \$20,000 in the State of North Carolina. The North Carolina Licensing Board for General Contractors (the Board) considers SPVP Installations for residential or commercial buildings to be electrical work unless the scope of work to be performed includes structural or other improvements that are \$30,000 or more and consist of work that is typically performed by licensed general contractors and regulated by the Board.

Electrical Contractor Related North Carolina General Statutes

North Carolina General Statutes N.C.G.S. 87-43 defines electrical contracting as follows:

“Electrical contracting shall be defined as engaging or offering to engage in the business of installing, maintaining, altering, or repairing any electric work, wiring, devices, appliances, or equipment. No person, partnership, firm, or corporation shall engage, or offer to engage, in the business of electrical contracting within the State of North Carolina without having received a license in the applicable classification described in G.S. 87-43.3 from the State Board of Examiners of Electrical Contractors in compliance with the provisions of this Article, regardless of whether the offer was made, or the work was performed by a qualified individual as defined in G.S. 87-41.1.” SPVP installations of any value requires an electrical contractor license. Installations valued at \$60,000.00 or less may be contracted by an unlimited, intermediate, or unlimited license. Installations valued at \$150,000.00 or less may be contracted by an unlimited or intermediate license. Installations with a project value greater than \$150,000.00 may only be contracted by an unlimited license.

[Read the Guidelines](#)