

# SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

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**Disciplines:** All**History:** Revised 01/07/26 under 2025 CBC  
Revised 01/18/24 Under 2022 CBC  
Revised 07/23/20 Under 2019 CBC  
Original Issue 08/15/08

Division of the State Architect (DSA) documents referenced within this publication are available on the [DSA Forms](#) or [DSA Publications](#) webpages.

## PURPOSE

This Interpretation of Regulations (IR) describes the DSA requirements for review and approval of solar systems used in construction projects under the jurisdiction of DSA.

## SCOPE

This IR clarifies the requirements for structural support of solar systems, anchorage of solar systems, solar support frame systems, balance-of-system (BOS) equipment, and building-integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) roofing systems. It also addresses the basic requirements of the California Building Code (CBC) for Fire Life Safety, Access Compliance, and certain electrical requirements. Projects involving the installation of solar systems and/or battery storage to existing buildings or structures or projects involving the installation of ground-mounted solar systems are not exempt from DSA review and construction oversight regardless of cost.

## BACKGROUND

Typical solar photovoltaic (PV) panel or thermal systems consist of the solar or thermal panels and their BOS equipment. Building-integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) roof covering systems consist of solar elements integrated into the roofing material. Throughout this document, generic reference to "solar systems" includes all three system types (see Glossary in Section 8 below). Where requirements are provided for a particular solar system, that system is specifically identified.

This IR provides structural design requirements for primary framing of buildings or structures supporting solar systems, and anchorage of solar systems to buildings and freestanding PV panel support structures. Specific requirements for design of PV racking systems, ballasted systems, and BIPV roofing system requirements are also covered in this IR. A glossary of terms is provided at the end of this document.

BIPV wall cladding systems are not covered in this document and shall be submitted as an alternative material in accordance with California Administrative Code (CAC), Section 4-304 and CBC Section 104.11. See Procedure (*PR*) 18-01: *Request for Alternate Design, Materials and Methods of Construction* for additional information. BIPV wall systems will require a preliminary meeting with DSA prior to submittal of project.

## 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLAR PROJECT COMPONENTS

### 1.1 General Requirements

**1.1.1** See Sections 2, 3 and 4 below respectively for gravity, wind and seismic design considerations specific to solar systems, their anchorage, and support. The applicable load combinations in CBC Section 1605A shall be applied to all loading conditions, including evaluating the effects of dead load to counteract wind uplift for ballasted and anchored systems.

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See Section 5 below for specialty system requirements for metal roofing, ballasted systems and BIPV systems. Section 6 below contains requirements to comply with ACS, FLS and electrical requirements for all projects, Section 7 below contains submittal requirements, and Section 8 below contains a Glossary of terms used in this document.

**1.1.2** DSA reviews the anchorage of solar systems and their BOS equipment, as well as any battery storage racks, to the building structure, foundation, or enclosure. DSA also reviews the design of any enclosures housing battery racks or other solar system equipment. The anchorage design of components must meet the wind design requirements of CBC Section 1609A and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 7, Chapters 29 and 30, and the seismic design requirements of CBC Section 1613A and ASCE 7 Chapter 13. DSA also reviews the design and detailing of enclosures for compliance with wind design provisions and ASCE 7 Chapter 15 (i.e., the enclosure is not treated as a “black box”). Alternatively, DSA will permit the enclosure to be prequalified in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 13.1.5 in lieu of satisfying Chapter 15 design requirements. Calculations, supporting data, plans and details as required in this IR shall be provided in accordance with Section 7 below.

**1.1.3** The vertical and lateral load resisting systems of the supporting structure shall be evaluated, including the additional loads from the solar system, BOS equipment, and any battery storage racks. The primary framing systems shall meet the wind design requirements of CBC Section 1609A and ASCE 7 Chapter 29, and the seismic design requirements of CBC Section 1613A and ASCE 7 Chapter 12.

**1.1.4** DSA reviews all elements of support frame systems that are designed by the design professional in charge or delegated engineer. DSA reviews primary framing elements of the supporting buildings and structures, foundations, anchorage details of panels to support frames, and connection details of support frames to primary structures or foundations. DSA does not review the design and construction of the individual elements of solar systems (e.g., PV panels). DSA also does not review individual elements of prefabricated rack-mounted frame systems which are included in an approved evaluation report per *IR A-5: Product and Material Acceptance Based on A Valid Evaluation Report*, nor other components of the BOS equipment. However, all elements of solar systems and BOS equipment must be designed and constructed to meet the requirements of Title 24 and applicable standards, including, but not limited to Underwriter Laboratories (UL) and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International.

**1.1.5** See Sections 6.1 and 6.2 below for design and/or submittal requirements for Access Compliance and Fire Life Safety, respectively.

### 1.1.6 Support Frame System Design Requirements

The design of support frame systems for solar panels shall be based on calculations or on testing in compliance with International Code Council Evaluation Service (ICC-ES) AC428: Acceptance Criteria for Modular Framing Systems Used to Support Photovoltaic (PV) Modules, or equal.

**1.1.6.1** Deflection of rails supporting solar panels shall not exceed the limits in CBC Section 1604A.3.7 for all load combinations applicable to the project.

**1.1.6.2** Rooftop solar support systems that are not ballasted systems shall be anchored by means of a direct positive connection to the roof structure per ASCE 7 Section 13.4. See Section 5 below for acceptable connections to standing seam metal roofing.

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**1.1.6.3** Freestanding PV panel support structures as defined in Section 8 below shall meet the additional requirements in *IR PC-7: Pre-Check (PC) Design Criteria for Steel Cantilevered Canopy Structures*.

### 1.2 Solar Panel Requirements

**1.2.1** Solar panels shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 1703: Flat-plate Photovoltaic Modules and Panels or UL 61730-1: Photovoltaic (PV) Module Safety Qualification - Part 1: Requirements for Construction and UL 61730-2: Photovoltaic (PV) Module Safety Qualification - Part 2: Requirements for Testing in accordance with CBC for the panel orientations shown on the plans. The UL certification shall be indicated on the drawings with evidence of UL certification provided by the panel manufacturer submitted as a reference document.

**1.2.2** Solar panel orientation (portrait and/or landscape layouts), anchorage point location, and installation tolerance range shall be specified on the drawings. Panel connection geometry shall be consistent with UL 1703 tests (and tests from UL 2703: Mounting Systems, Mounting Devices, Clamping/Retention Devices and Ground Lugs for Use with Flat-plate Photovoltaic Modules and Panels, if utilized) or UL 61730-1 and UL 61730-2. If horizontal slip joints (e.g., thermal expansion joints) in framing members are present, panels must not span across nor be connected on opposing sides of the slip joints.

**1.2.3** Drawings must specify overall solar panel dimensions and fully dimensioned frame configuration of the specified panel including height, length, width, thickness of each web/flange, and material grade.

**1.2.4** The design drawings shall specify the solar panel allowable load capacity in pounds per square foot (psf) based on an effective area equal to the area of one PV panel. Allowable stress load combinations in ASCE 7 Section 2.4, or CBC Section 1604A.2 shall be used for the purposes of verifying solar panel capacity for wind and gravity loads.

As required by UL, a minimum 1.5 safety factor shall be applied to the test loads from a UL 1703 or 61730-2 mechanical load test to determine allowable load capacity. The solar panel manufacturer shall provide the test load, the allowable loads and the panel connection locations that correspond with the test data. Test loads from a UL test are often performed at 1200 Pa (25.0psf), 2400 Pa (50.1 psf), or 5400 Pa (112.8 psf) which are then divided by the 1.5 safety factor to determine the allowable loads. The uplift load is often expressed by manufacturers as a "back side" load or "pull" load, and the downward load as a "front side" load or "push" load.

If the PV panel load capacity data was not derived from a UL test, the testing shall conform to IR A-5 Section 2.4, and the test report shall be provided to DSA for review.

## 2. GRAVITY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Primary framing and foundations of buildings or structures and freestanding structures that support solar systems shall be designed for gravity loads and load combinations as required by CBC and described in this section. Freestanding steel cantilevered canopy structures shall also comply with provisions of IR PC-7. These design loads apply to solar system attachments to support frames or structure, support frame system anchorage to structure or foundation, and to ballast requirements for ballasted systems.

Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC) Report PV-3: Gravity Design for Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Arrays (SEAOC PV-3) provides further guidance for gravity design of solar PV panel systems; see the References section below at the end of this document.

**2.1** For installations on existing roofs, California Existing Building Code (CEBC) Section 503.3 shall be satisfied: Any existing gravity load-carrying structural element for which an alteration

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causes an increase in design dead load, live load or snow load, including snow drift effects, of more than 5 percent, shall be replaced or altered as needed to carry the load required by the CBC for new structures. The five percent shall be based on each of those loads individually. Refer to DSA IR EB-1 Section 6.1 for determining allowable stresses on existing wood framing members.

### 2.2 Requirements for Dead Load

In accordance with CBC Section 1606A.4, solar panels are considered a dead load. This increase in dead load shall be considered in the design of:

- Framing members of the building or structure upon which the solar support frames are placed including deflection limits in accordance with CBC Section 1604A.3.
- Anchorage of the solar support frames to the building or structure.
- Solar panel attachments to the support frames and/or directly to structural framing.

The increase in effective seismic weight on the structure shall be evaluated in accordance with CAC Section 4-309 and Section 2.1 above.

### 2.3 Requirements for Live Load

Framing members of buildings and structures that support solar systems shall be designed for live load in accordance with CBC Section 1607A.14.3. Unbalanced live loads shall be included in design of the structure.

Roof framing shall also be designed for uniform and concentrated live load requirements in CBC Section 1607A.14.4 without the solar PV panel or thermal panel system present. For freestanding elevated PV support structures of open grid framing and no roof sheathing or decking, as often occurs in canopies over parking and shade structures supporting solar panels, see CBC Section 1607A.14.3.3 and IR PC-7 for live loading conditions in combination with other applicable loads. Ground-mounted PV panel system structures are not required to accommodate live loading per CBC Section 1607.14.3.4.

### 2.4 Requirements for Snow Load

When applicable, include snow loads and loads from snow drift created by solar PV panel or thermal panel systems per CBC Section 1607A.14.3.2.

## 3. WIND DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

The wind design requirements for solar systems are given in CBC Section 1609A and ASCE 7 Chapters 29 and 30 and as described in the sections below. See also IR PC-7 for wind loads on steel cantilevered canopy structures and solar panel attachment to those structures. It is not permitted to use a lower mean recurrence interval for a reduction in basic wind speed below that of ASCE 7 Figures 26.5-1 and 26.5-2.

As an alternate means, the "Wind Tunnel Procedure" in ASCE 7 Chapter 31 and Section 3.7 below may be used to establish design wind loads for any solar panel system.

### 3.1 Rooftop Solar PV Panel Systems

Rooftop solar panel systems shall be designed in accordance with Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 below as appropriate. For systems that do not fall within all the parameters of ASCE 7, Section 29.4.3 or 29.4.4 as referenced below, such as non-parallel sloped panels on sloped roofs, or panels that exceed the maximum length or distance between panel gaps, the designer shall submit a form *DSA 1-AMM: Request for Alternate Design, Materials, and Methods of Construction* to DSA for approval of design methodology prior to submittal.

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Design of elevated PV support structures mounted on top of the roof of another structure shall provide an analysis that adequately addresses the height of the base of those structures above the ground surface. Designers shall submit a DSA-1 AMM to DSA for approval of design methodology prior to project submittal. The elevated PV panel system structure shall also meet additional requirements in IR PC-7.

### **3.1.1 Rooftop Solar Panels on Buildings of All Heights with Flat, Gable or Hip Roofs**

Solar panel systems installed on buildings of all heights with flat, gable or hip roofs with slopes less than 7 degrees shall be designed and located in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 29.4.3.

### **3.1.2 Rooftop Solar Panels Parallel to Roof Surface**

Solar panel systems installed parallel to roof surface on buildings of all heights and roof slopes shall be designed and located in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 29.4.4.

### **3.1.3 Shielding or Shadowing Effects on Rooftop Solar Panel Systems**

No reduction of wind load shall be taken for shielding or shadowing effect of multiple rows of solar panel arrays for the design of solar panels, support frames and attachments to the roof framing or structure.

As an alternate means of approval, shielding or shadowing effects may be considered for approval by DSA:

- When derived utilizing the wind tunnel procedure in ASCE 7 Chapter 31.
- When justified utilizing SEAOC Report PV-2: Wind Design for Solar Arrays (SEAOC PV-2), Section 4.3 regarding shielding or shadowing effects of edge panel arrays, parapets and roof projections.

## **3.2 Solar Thermal Systems**

CBC and ASCE 7 do not contain specific wind design provisions for solar thermal systems. Thermal flat-panel systems that meet geometric, gap and spacing requirements for rooftop solar PV panels may use the wind design provisions of ASCE 7 Section 29.4.3 or 29.4.4 accordingly and as described in Section 3.1 above. Non-flat panel thermal systems shall meet the requirements of ASCE 7 Section 29.4.1 or design loads may be established by a recognized evaluation report or by the Wind Tunnel Procedure in ASCE 7.

## **3.3 BIPV Roof Covering Systems**

BIPV roof covering systems shall meet the wind requirements for Components and Cladding in ASCE 7 Chapter 30.

## **3.4 Minimum Wind Loads**

The minimum wind load case shall comply with ASCE 7 Section 29.7 for those using a design based on Chapter 29 as noted in the sections above.

## **3.5 Freestanding PV Panel Support Systems**

Freestanding elevated PV panel systems shall be designed using the open building provisions in ASCE 7 Chapter 29 for the MWFRS and Chapter 30 for C&C loads and shall also comply with the requirements in IR PC-7. Freestanding ground-mounted PV panel systems with no occupant load beneath may be designed using ASCE 7 Section 29.5.4 when the parameters of that section match the specific design.

The Risk Category for wind design shall not be less than that required for the occupancy use below the structure, nor less than Risk Category (RC) II. Shielding or shadowing effects are not

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permitted unless validated and approved as an alternate means by DSA in accordance with Section 3.1.3 above.

### **3.6 Other Systems**

Solar panel systems not meeting the requirements and limitations of Sections 3.1 through 3.4 above shall use the Wind Tunnel Procedure in ASCE 7 and Section 3.7 below to establish design wind loads.

### **3.7 Wind Tunnel Procedure**

When utilizing the wind tunnel procedure in ASCE 7 Chapter 31 to develop wind loads for solar PV arrays, the wind tunnel model shall properly model the wind flow environment in accordance with ASCE 7 Sections 31.2 and 31.6, and in accordance with the requirements in ASCE 49: Wind Tunnel Testing for Buildings and Other Structures and SEAOC PV-2 Section 7.2.

- **Modeling:** When developing generalizable wind loads for rooftop solar PV arrays, the wind tunnel model shall include to-scale the array configuration and layouts placed on the roof of a building that properly models the rooftop wind flow environment. The model shall include various building features that affect the wind flow environment on the roof. The testing and instrumentation shall be designed to determine the wind load effects in different roof zones (e.g., corner, edge, center, etc.). Modeling site-specific buildings is not necessary; rather, generic models with buildings large enough in plan area to capture the wind flow environment over different roof zones may be used.
- **Instrumentation:** Wind tunnel testing shall use an arrangement of pressure taps or other instrumentation methodology sufficient to establish design wind forces on solar panels and the variation of such forces as a function of effective wind area.
- **Results:** Wind tunnel results shall not be extrapolated to other panel geometry, panel inclination angle, panel row spacing, panel elevation above roof surface, or other roof shape types (e.g., gable, hip, barrel, flat, etc.) that were not part of the wind tunnel study. For moderate changes in panel angle, row spacing, or other parameters, reasonable interpolation between two or more tests is permitted. The limitations of any wind tunnel study, such as the range of array and building geometry parameters that were tested, shall be clearly reported along with the results. The wind tunnel results shall provide wind loads for the design of each structural element of the panel support system, such as by providing design wind pressures as a function of effective wind area. The wind tunnel results shall be provided in a format that is compatible with ASCE 7 (e.g., GC factors) that can be adjusted for site and buildings characteristics (i.e., exposure, building height, wind speed, etc.). Small variations between tested roof slope and design roof slope may be accepted if the wind tunnel laboratory provides a written statement that the variation is within the parameters of their study and the peer reviewer provides written concurrence when a peer review is required.

#### **3.7.1 Minimum Wind Pressure for Wind Tunnel Procedure**

The minimum design wind loads based on a wind tunnel study for solar panel systems shall comply with this section.

##### **3.7.1.1 Rooftop Solar Panels for Buildings**

For solar panel systems that meet the limitations and geometry requirements defined in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above, the minimum design wind load based on a wind tunnel study shall be in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 31.6.1.1 and need not comply with the minimum wind pressure of 16 psf per ASCE 7 Section 30.2.2. The minimum design wind load in ASCE 7

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Section 31.5.2 shall be based on ASCE 7 Section 29.4.4, not Figure 29.4-7, in accordance with SEAOC PV-2 Section 7.2.4.

### **3.7.1.2 Minimum Loads for the Main Wind Force Resisting System**

Determined by wind tunnel testing shall be limited in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 31.4.4.

### **3.7.1.3 Minimum Pressures for Components and Cladding**

Determined by wind tunnel testing shall be limited in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 31.4.4.

### **3.7.1.4 Other Systems**

Other systems, as described in Section 3.6 above, shall comply with the minimum design wind loads as determined above for rooftop solar panel systems when based on a wind tunnel study. Limits lower than these minimums are subject to an independent peer review per Section 3.7.2 below and/or approval of DSA.

## **3.7.2 Wind Tunnel Study Peer Review**

The independent peer review is an objective, technical review by knowledgeable reviewer(s) experienced in performing wind tunnel studies on buildings and similar systems, in properly simulated atmospheric boundary layers. Peer review shall be performed in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 31.6.1.2 and SEAOC PV-2 Section 7.2.6.

DSA may require an independent peer review of a wind tunnel study in accordance with this section, depending on complexity and suitability of the study and qualifications of the wind tunnel laboratory. DSA will require an independent peer review of a wind tunnel study where wind load values lower than the minimums are being used, only where specifically allowed in Section 3.7 or when utilizing a ballasted system per Section 5.2 below. Once a particular wind tunnel study has been peer reviewed and found acceptable, it need not be peer reviewed for subsequent projects provided the applicability and findings are appropriate for such projects.

The peer review shall be completed before substantial portions of the design and/or analysis work will be reviewed by DSA.

### **3.7.2.1 Peer Reviewer Qualifications**

Minimum qualifications and terms of employment for the peer reviewer shall be as follows:

- The peer reviewer shall be independent from the wind tunnel laboratory that performed the study and prepared the report and shall bear no conflict of interest.
- The peer reviewer shall be acceptable to DSA.
- The peer reviewer shall have technical expertise in the application of wind tunnel studies on buildings similar to that being reviewed.
- The peer reviewer shall have experience in performing or evaluating boundary layer wind tunnel studies and shall be familiar with the technical issues and regulations governing the wind tunnel procedure in ASCE 7 as it is applied to systems similar to solar PV arrays that use generalized wind tunnel data for design.

### **3.7.2.2 Peer Reviewer Responsibilities**

The peer reviewer shall review the wind tunnel report, including, but not limited to, data collection methods, data analysis, boundary layer modeling, array and building modeling, resulting wind loads and their relationship to effective wind area, conversion of data into GC values, and conditions of applicability of results to different building types, array geometry, etc.

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The peer reviewer shall prepare a written report to the client. Such a report shall include, at a minimum, statements regarding the following:

- Scope of peer review with limitations defined.
- The status of the wind tunnel study at time of review.
- Conformance of the wind tunnel study with the requirements of ASCE 7 Section 31.2, ASCE 49, and SEAOC PV-2 Section 7.2.6.
- Presentation of the conclusions of the reviewer identifying any areas that need further review, investigation and/or clarification.
- Recommendations.
- Whether in the reviewer's opinion, the wind loads derived from the wind tunnel study are in conformance with ASCE 7 for the intended use(s).

### **3.8 Other Wind Design Considerations**

#### **3.8.1 Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD)**

CFD is not recognized by ASCE 7 as an acceptable method to develop wind loads, and therefore is not acceptable to DSA.

#### **3.8.2 Solar PV Wind Load Applied to Main Wind Force-Resisting System (MWFRS)**

For solar PV systems installed on buildings, the MWFRS shall be designed to include the wind load from the solar PV panels, except solar PV systems flush-mounted to the roof. When calculating the contributing wind load from the solar PV panels, the effective wind area may be assumed to be the total area of solar arrays on the building. The increase of wind load on the MWFRS of existing buildings shall be evaluated per CAC Section 4-309.

## **4. SEISMIC DESIGN REQUIREMENTS**

The seismic anchorage design of solar panels and support frame systems attached to buildings shall be based on the requirements in CBC Section 1613A and ASCE 7 Chapter 13. Seismic coefficients for roof-mounted (attached) solar panel systems shall be for "Other mechanical or electrical components" in ASCE 7 Table 13.6-1 ( $C_{ar} = 1$ ,  $R_{po} = 1.5$ ,  $\Omega_{op} = 2.0$ ), unless otherwise substantiated in consideration of SEAOC Report PV-1: Structural Seismic Requirements and Commentary for Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Arrays (SEAOC PV-1).

Freestanding PV panel support structures systems shall meet the requirements in Section 4.3 below.

### **4.1 Friction**

Friction due to gravity cannot be used to resist seismic loads in combination with attachments as allowed in SEAOC PV-1 Section 4, unless shake table testing or nonlinear response history analysis is performed. Testing or analysis must be similar to that described in SEAOC PV-1 Section 9, demonstrating satisfactory load sharing between friction and attachments, subject to the peer review requirements in Section 5.2.4 below.

### **4.2 Ballasted Solar Panel Systems**

Ballasted systems shall be designed for seismic forces and displacements in accordance with CBC Section 1607A.14.4.5 and ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12 Exceptions. Ballasted systems that resist seismic forces by friction alone shall be designed in accordance with Section 5.2 below.

### **4.3 Freestanding PV Panel Support Systems**

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The design of the seismic force-resisting system of freestanding elevated PV panel support systems such as canopies over parking, shade structures, and walkways, shall be based on ASCE 7 Chapter 12 and additional requirements in IR PC-7. The design of the seismic force-resisting system of ground-mounted PV panel systems without useable space below may be based on ASCE 7 Chapter 15 and additional requirements in IR PC-7. Freestanding ground-mounted PV support structures with a clear height of 6'-8" or more shall be considered to have useable space below unless the system is completely fenced to prohibit access to teachers and students.

The Risk Category for seismic design of freestanding PV panel support systems shall not be less than that required by the occupancy use below the structure, nor less than RC II.

### **5. REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLAR SYSTEMS ATTACHED TO STANDING SEAM METAL ROOFING SYSTEMS (SSMR), BALLASTED SYSTEMS, AND BIPV**

#### **5.1 Solar PV Systems Supported by SSMR**

A solar PV system that connects directly to a standing seam metal roofing (SSMR) system shall comply with this section. SSMR is typically attached to a roof structure with concealed connectors which resist the wind uplift forces and allow the panels to slide under thermal expansion. Drag loads down the roof slope are typically resisted by direct connections of screw fasteners at the ridge or eaves.

The capacity of the SSMR to support the loads from the solar system shall comply with Section 5.1.1 below; the solar system design and attachments to the SSMR shall comply with Section 5.1.2 below; and the field quality control testing shall comply with Section 5.1.3 below.

##### **5.1.1 SSMR Project Classification and Capacity**

Projects shall be classified as New Construction, Supplemental Construction, or Existing Construction as defined in sections below.

###### **5.1.1.1 New Construction**

*New Construction* is defined as a project where the SSMR design and installation as well as the solar system design and installation are both part of the same DSA application and the same incremental submittal. The design drawings shall include a complete design and detailing of both the SSMR system and the solar system framing and components within the same set of building construction documents, or as part of an approved deferred submittal per Section 7.5 below.

**5.1.1.1.1** Wind uplift capacity of the roofing shall be established by qualified test reports per CBC Section 1504.4.2 or valid evaluation reports per IR A-5. Calculations alone will not be acceptable to establish wind uplift capacity of the SSMR or the attachments. Concentrated uplift loads imposed by a solar system to the SSMR may be justified by showing that the loading will not exceed the equivalent stresses that were produced by the uniform pressure from the test data.

**5.1.1.1.2** Drag load capacity of the roofing may be established via structural calculation for direct screw attachments. Drag loads need only be considered for projects where the roof slopes exceed 2:12 slope. When the roofing system is connected to the roof structure through a layer of insulation, calculations shall be provided to justify adequate transfer of any drag load to the roof structure below.

###### **5.1.1.2 Supplemental Construction**

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**5.1.1.2.1** *Supplemental Construction* is defined as a project where the SSMR scope and solar system scope are submitted in separate packages, either as separate increments within the same DSA application or in different DSA application numbers. There is no limit on the date of construction of the previously installed SSMR scope, however, the SSMR must meet the requirements of this section. Capacity of the SSMR system and connections shall be established as defined for *New Construction* in Section 5.1.1.1 above. The design documents for the SSMR scope shall identify the roofing material and manufacturer as well as include connection details. The SSMR product must have substantiating test data or an evaluation report per Section 5.1.1.1 above for the wind uplift and calculations based on that data to show the adequacy of the SSMR to support the solar panel loading. The submittal drawings shall be prepared per either Options 1 or 2 in Sections 5.1.1.2.1.1 or 5.1.1.2.1.2 below.

**5.1.1.2.1.1** Option 1: The SSMR construction documents shall identify the locations where future solar panels can be supported and the loads that can be supported in those areas. The maximum allowable concentrated uplift and drag loads that can be resisted by the SSMR system and the attachments to the roof structure must be denoted on the plans, including the spacing and direction of those loads. These prescriptive loads shall be substantiated by engineering calculations.

**5.1.1.2.1.2** Option 2: The solar system project submittal shall include the complete identification and installation details for both the existing SSMR and the solar system design, similar to a *New Construction* submittal as defined in Section 5.1.1.1 above. The submittal shall include all the substantiating calculations and test data for the SSMR connections to the structure and the solar system element design and connection details. The solar project submittal shall also include the submittal documents for the previously installed SSMR project as reference material in a separate supporting document file.

### 5.1.1.3 Existing Construction

*Existing Construction* is defined as any SSMR system that does not meet all the requirements of either *New Construction* or *Supplemental Construction* as defined in sections above. Provide structural calculations to establish the sliding and uplift design loads imposed by the solar panel system on the SSMR that shall be verified with field tests as defined in Section 5.1.3.2 below.

**5.1.1.3.1** The uplift capacity of the SSMR to resist factored design uplift loads shall be established and verified through the initial field installation testing indicated in 5.1.3.2.1 below. The testing shall be conducted utilizing the specified solar support frame fastening devices, and the results shall be submitted to DSA prior to plan approval.

**Exception:** If the PV support system is connected to each crossing seam of the SSMR, this testing may be performed after plan approval, at the beginning of connector installation in accordance with Section 5.1.3.2 below. This exception will be minimally satisfied when each line of solar panel attachments is connected to alternating seams.

**5.1.1.3.2** The drag load capacity of the metal roofing panel attachments to the roof substrate may be determined by calculations based on existing construction documents, roof panel removal, or by other acceptable means (e.g., removal of ridge cap, etc.). For verification by panel removal, one panel shall be removed for every 3000 sq. ft. of roof area and not less than a minimum of three locations per building to verify the attachment method and shall be shown on the submitted plans.

### 5.1.2 Solar System Design and Attachment to SSMR

The components of the solar PV support frame system, including system or unique seam connecting devices (e.g., S-5! clamps, AceClamp, etc.) and their attachment to the metal roofing

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panels, shall be specified and detailed on the plans. Structural calculations shall be provided for the support framing, anchors and anchor reactions, except that calculations for the capacity of prefabricated rack-mounted frame and/or anchor systems justified by an evaluation report in accordance with IR A-5 need not be provided (see also Section 1.1.4 above). Product information (model number, manufacturer, etc.), evaluation or test report in accordance with Section 5.1.3.1 below, and installation procedure (i.e., torque, retightening of set screws, etc.) of the seam connecting devices shall be specified. If the racking system imposes an eccentric load to the solar connector, calculations shall be provided to show that the screws are adequate to resist the moment, or a testing report shall be provided to show that the capacity of the connectors is established for an eccentric loading condition.

### 5.1.2.1 Validation of Solar System Connecting Devices to SSMR

For all classifications of SSMR systems, the uplift and lateral (sliding) design values of the connecting devices (e.g., S-5! clamps, AceClamp, etc.) between the panel array and the metal roofing must be validated by the means specified below.

The capacity of the connectors shall be based on one of the following:

- A valid evaluation report per IR A-5 Section 2.3.
- Tests performed by a third-party testing agency that meets the qualifications listed in IR A-5 Section 2.4.

The evaluation report or tests performed by the third-party for validation of the connecting devices shall satisfy requirements noted in Sections 5.1.2.1.1 through 5.1.2.1.4 below. Test data must be for the same metal panel system (i.e., profile, manufacturer and gauge) used for the project.

**5.1.2.1.1** The connecting device shall be tested in separate tests for uplift and drag load parallel to the seam. Uplift test may be performed similarly to the test shown in Photograph #1 in Appendix B. The load rate shall be per ICC-ES AC428 Section 3.2.5. If the roof slope does not exceed 2:12 slope, drag load testing is not required. The drag load testing procedure shall be proposed by a licensed structural engineer and approved by DSA prior to the testing.

**5.1.2.1.2** The failure criteria shall be any slip of the connecting device from the standing seam or the cracking of the standing seam, whichever occurs first.

**5.1.2.1.3** A minimum of four tests are required for each direction for each SSMR system, and the allowable design value shall be the average of the four tests with a safety factor of 3 or higher.

**5.1.2.1.4** The design values must be verified and submitted to DSA plan review prior to plan approval.

### 5.1.3 Field Installation Quality Assurance Testing

All testing shall be performed by a DSA accepted Laboratory of Record approved by the Architect or Structural Engineer of Record (SEOR) for the project. The Project Inspector or designated Special Inspector shall observe the installation of all connecting devices to the metal roofing. The approved plans shall clearly indicate the testing requirements. The solar field test report shall include the number of tests performed at each building in each wind zone, any failures during testing, and any noticeable deformation after testing and shall be distributed to the Project Inspector and all others indicated to receive such reports. The required testing shall be indicated on the form *DSA 103: List of Structural Tests and Special Inspections* for the project at the time of approval. See Appendix D for an example DSA 103 form in the user defined “X1. | Other” section.

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Any damage incurred to the existing roofing during testing shall be repaired at the direction of the design professional in responsible charge and approved by DSA.

### **5.1.3.1 Field Testing On New or Supplemental Construction**

Field tests described below are required on new or supplemental construction to verify proper installation of the solar system connecting device to the metal roofing.

When connecting devices have a valid evaluation report by an organization recognized by DSA per IR A-5 Section 2.3, the field testing of the connecting devices may be based on periodic special inspection of the installation for all Seismic Design Categories, or as required by the evaluation report, whichever requires more inspection or testing.

When connecting devices are evaluated by other accredited organizations meeting the requirements of IR A-5 Section 2.4, the field testing shall consist of pull tests to twice the maximum allowable stress design (ASD) wind uplift load tributary to the connecting device based on the wind pressure at areas of discontinuity such as roof edges and ridges per Sections 5.1.3.1.1 and 5.1.3.1.2 below. The load rate shall be per ICC-ES AC428 Section 3.2.5. See Photograph #1 in Appendix B below for an illustration of the test.

**5.1.3.1.1** After all the connecting devices have been installed, test a minimum of 20 consecutive devices. If there is no failure in 20 consecutive tests, test 10 percent of the remaining installed connecting devices.

**5.1.3.1.2** If failure occurs before 20 consecutive successful tests are completed, then additional tests shall be performed until 20 consecutive successful tests are completed, then continue at a rate of 10 percent on the remaining installed devices.

### **5.1.3.2 Field Testing On Existing Construction**

Field testing described below is required to verify the uplift capacity of the solar system connections, the SSMR connections to the structure, and proper installation of the solar system connecting device within the same upward pull test. See Photograph #2 in Appendix B below for an illustration of the test. The pull test load rate shall be in accordance with ICC-ES AC428 Section 3.2.5. All test locations shall be selected by the design professional in responsible charge for the solar system anchorage and support and shall be distributed over the roof area to capture the various roof pressure zones.

For all projects, provide field testing in accordance with Sections 5.1.3.2.1 and 5.1.3.2.2 below after installation of all connectors.

When performing initial field installation testing to satisfy Section 5.1.3.1 above, perform the testing in Section 5.1.3.2.1 below to establish the wind uplift resistance of the metal roofing system. A qualified contractor shall install the clips, and a DSA approved Project Inspector shall observe the testing.

**5.1.3.2.1** Initial testing shall consist of a total of five group tests spread throughout the roof zones. Each group test will consist of three (minimum) adjacent connecting devices on the same seam. These devices shall be pull tested simultaneously to 1.67 times the maximum design wind load (ASD) on each device based on the pressure coefficients for the roof zones (1, 2 or 3) in which the connection is located. If the three devices for one group test straddle multiple roof zones, each device shall be pulled to the test load which correlates to the zone in which the device is located.

**5.1.3.2.1.1** The reaction from the pull test shall bridge over at least one seam on each side of the tested seam.

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**5.1.3.2.1.2** If failure occurs during the initial five group tests continue testing until five consecutive successful tests of the similar configuration are performed. These five consecutive successful tests are not counted as part of the 10 percent on the remaining connections.

**5.1.3.2.2** After the initial testing described above, continue testing groups of three adjacent connecting devices at a rate of 10 percent of the remaining connections.

**5.1.3.2.2.1** If failure occurs on any of the remaining setups, additional group tests shall be performed until five consecutive successful group tests are performed.

### **5.2 Ballasted Solar PV Systems**

Ballasted solar PV arrays rely on their weight and ballast to resist the wind uplift forces, while friction between the array supports and the roof surface resist seismic forces. Gravity design requirements are indicated in Section 2 above. Wind load design requirements are indicated in Section 3 above. Seismic design requirements are indicated in Section 4.2 above.

#### **5.2.1 Conditions for Use**

Ballasted arrays are only permitted when all the following conditions are met:

**5.2.1.1** The maximum roof slope at the location of the array is less than or equal to 1:20 slope (2.9 degrees) per ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12. Where justified by testing and analysis and a peer review is conducted in accordance with Section 5.2.4 below, the maximum roof slope for buildings assigned to Seismic Design Category D may be less than or equal to 1:12 slope (4.8 degrees) per ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12 Exception #7.

**5.2.1.2** The height above the roof surface to the center of mass of the solar array is less than the smaller of 36 inches and half the least plan dimension of the supporting base of the basket.

**5.2.1.3** The roof shall not be subject to significant ice, snow or frost considering the seismicity at the site. For the purposes of determining this, it will be acceptable to consider it as not significant if the lowest average monthly low temperature (LAMLT) for any month in the city the building is located and the seismicity at the site comply with any of the following limits:

- Any roof where  $S_{DS} < 0.5$ .
- Any roof where the  $LAMLT \geq 32^\circ F$  and  $S_1 < 0.75$ .
- Any roof where  $LAMLT \geq 35^\circ F$ .

Appendix C lists major California cities and the LAMLT.

#### **5.2.2 Requirements to Accommodate Seismic Displacements**

For ballasted arrays, the accommodation of seismic displacement shall be afforded by providing the minimum separation determined in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12 Exceptions #2 and #6 to allow sliding.

**5.2.2.1** Each separate array shall be interconnected as an integral unit and have the strength as indicated in ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12. Elements of the array that are not interconnected as specified shall be considered structurally separate and shall be provided with the required minimum separation. The interconnection force shall be resisted by continuous members along each row of ballasts in both orthogonal directions or equivalent means and not through the solar panels unless the panels have been tested for such loading. The elements resisting the interconnection force shall be evaluated separately in tension and compression, as well as bending where load transfer is required between continuous members.

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**5.2.2.2** Friction testing per SEAOC PV-1 Section 8 shall be conducted where required to determine the seismic displacements.

### **5.2.3 Effective Wind Area**

**5.2.3.1** For wind uplift, the effective wind area (EWA) shall be validated by the SEOR for the solar panel support system, based on principles of mechanics and testing submitted to DSA for review and approval. The out-of-plane load sharing capabilities of the modules and interconnection assemblies shall be resisted by continuous members or equivalent means and not through the solar panels. Per ASCE 7 Section C26.2, if the support system for the solar array has adequate strength, stiffness, and interconnectedness to span across a support or ballast point, the EWA can be correspondingly increased, provided that strengths are not governed by brittle failure and that the deformation of the array is evaluated and does not result in adverse performance. The vertical deflection that the array is allowed to undergo shall also be validated by the SEOR. If a wind tunnel study is used, it shall also be validated by the wind tunnel engineer. It should be noted that smaller deflection limits typically require consideration of smaller EWA.

In lieu of calculations or testing, prescriptive EWA factors may be used as a function of module area without justification or additional analysis as noted below:

- EWA Factor = 1 for corner modules.
- EWA Factor = 1.5 for edge modules.
- EWA Factor = 4 for interior modules located one panel from edge.
- EWA Factor = 6 for interior modules located more than one panel from edge.

**5.2.3.2** For sliding, the EWA of an array may be taken as the entire solar panel area of the array for each array that is interconnected as an integral unit with continuous members in both directions as noted in Section 5.2.2 above. For arrays that do not comply with the above interconnection requirements, the EWA to evaluate sliding shall be taken equal to the area of one module.

### **5.2.4 Peer Review Requirements**

DSA may require an independent peer review when the seismic displacements are determined by nonlinear response history analysis or shake table testing depending on complexity of the analysis and availability of staff qualified to perform such review. If seismic displacements are less than 50 percent of the values indicated in the prescriptive design seismic displacements indicated in ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12, then an independent peer review must be performed. The peer reviewer shall be approved by DSA and the peer review shall comply with California Existing Building Code (CEBC), Section 322.

### **5.2.5 Other Considerations**

Ballasted solar PV systems shall not cause excessive sagging of the roof resulting in water ponding. They shall also not block or impede drainage flows to any overflow drains and scuppers as a result of the movement of the array imposed by the seismic displacements.

The electrical systems and other items attached to arrays shall be flexible and designed to accommodate the required minimum separation in a manner that meets code life-safety performance requirements. Details of providing slackness or movement capability to electrical wiring shall be included on the approved drawings for the solar installation in accordance with ASCE 7 Section 13.6.12, Exception #5.

## **5.3 BIPV Roof Covering Systems**

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BIPV roof covering systems shall be in accordance with CBC Section 1507.17, and their anchorage to the structure shall be subject to the design requirements described in Sections 2, 3 and 4 above.

Adhered PV panels may be accepted if test and analysis data, and quality control and assurance program are submitted to demonstrate compliance with ICC-ES AC365: Acceptance Criteria for Building-Integrated Photovoltaic (BIPV) Roof Covering Systems. Tests shall be performed by an accredited third-party testing agency or a valid evaluation report per IR A-5 may be submitted.

If any BIPV system is anticipated or being considered for use on a project, a preliminary meeting with DSA will be required. The local DSA Regional Office should be contacted early in the design phase of the project.

### **6. ACCESS COMPLIANCE, FIRE LIFE SAFETY AND ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the above structural design requirements, the following requirements apply:

#### **6.1 Access Compliance**

Projects which consist only of solar alteration work installed on existing buildings and which are accessed only by ladders, catwalks or narrow passages and frequented only by maintenance personnel do not trigger accessibility code requirements or DSA accessibility review. See CBC Sections 11B-203.4 and 11B-203.5 for detailed requirements, and *IR 11B-6: Mechanical Only Projects Exempt from Accessibility Review*.

New shade structures, lunch shelters, and canopies incorporating solar panels will require access compliance review. Please refer to *IR 11B-9: Accessibility Requirements for Solar Photovoltaic Systems at School Sites*, for CBC accessibility requirements related to these structures.

#### **6.2 Fire Life Safety Requirements**

DSA Fire Life Safety (FLS) provides the following for clarification and to address issues that have arisen during plan review. For purposes of application, ground-mounted structures supporting PV solar arrays are considered 'buildings' as defined in CBC Chapter 2 (i.e., Any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy). Design and construction of ground-mounted PV solar arrays shall comply with CBC Section 3111, California Fire Code (CFC) Section 1205 requirements, and as modified herein. Those ground-mounted systems with no occupancy or use underneath are considered equipment structures designed in compliance with CBC and CFC requirements, and Section 6.2.5 below.

##### **6.2.1 Materials Testing and Listing**

**6.2.1.1** Photovoltaic panels and modules shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 1703 or with both UL 61730-1 and 61730-2. Inverters shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 1741.

**6.2.1.2** BIPV systems: Photovoltaic shingles and roof panels shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 2703 or with both UL 61730-1 and 61730-2.

##### **6.2.2 Fire Classification**

**6.2.2.1** Rooftop-mounted photovoltaic (PV) panel systems shall be tested, listed and identified with a fire classification in accordance with UL 2703. Listed systems shall be installed in accordance with their listing and the manufacturer's installation instructions, and have a fire classification compliant with CBC Table 1505.1 based on the building construction type.

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**6.2.2.2** Elevated PV panel support structures with PV panels installed over open grid framing or noncombustible decks shall have PV panels tested, listed and labeled with a fire rating in accordance with UL 7103 or with both UL 61730-1 and 61730-2. PV panels marked "not fire rated" shall not be installed on elevated PV support structures.

**6.2.2.3** Elevated PV panel support structures with a PV panel system installed over a roof assembly shall have a fire classification in accordance with CBC Section 1505.9.

**6.2.2.4** Building-integrated photovoltaic (BIPV) systems installed as a roof assembly, or a roof covering shall have a fire classification in accordance with CBC Section 1505.1 that directs they be tested in accordance with ASTM E108: Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Roof Coverings or UL 790: Standard Test Methods for Fire Tests of Roof Coverings.

**6.2.2.5** Roof coverings in designated fire hazard severity zones (FHSZ) shall have a minimum Class A fire classification. Roof coverings within all other areas shall have a minimum Class C fire classification.

### **6.2.3 Elevated PV Panel Support Systems with Use Underneath**

The following requirements are applicable for elevated PV panel system arrays with use underneath.

**6.2.3.1** PV support framework and panels shall not be in, or extend into, dedicated fire apparatus access roadways. Support framework and PV arrays may extend above and over designated fire lanes when a minimum 13'-6" vertical clearance is provided and there is no encroachment affecting the fire apparatus required turning radius. PV equipment supported by non-combustible framing installed in locations dedicated for building frontage used for area increases per CBC Section 506, shall be limited in size, and may be allowed on a case by case basis. The maximum area that may be allowed for such systems shall not exceed 1/3 of the horizontal projected area of each frontage.

**6.2.3.2** For determining the Risk Category, an occupant load shall be calculated per CBC Section 1004, Table 1004.5 based on function of the area or space as applicable, and the load indicated on the drawings.

**6.2.3.3** PV panels supported by framing shall have sufficient uniformly distributed and unobstructed openings throughout the top of the array (horizontal plane) to allow heat and gases to escape.

**6.2.3.4** Access to a public way or safe dispersal area shall not be obstructed by the system or system framing (Refer to CBC Sections 452.1.3 and 1028.5).

**6.2.3.5** PV systems installed above outdoor assembly areas such as amphitheaters, bleachers, or grandstand seating (occupancy Group A-5) shall not impede the free ventilation provisions of the CBC associated with 'smoke-protected seating'.

### **6.2.4 Specific Requirements for Elevated PV Panel Support Structures at Parking Areas**

For the purposes of this IR, "open-sided, high profile ground-mounted PV installation" means:

- The highest point of the panels is 10 feet or more from the ground.
- Meets the minimum 6' -8" clearance requirement below with a use underneath (minimum 8'-2" clearance when installed above accessible parking spaces).
- When installed above designated fire lanes, has a minimum vertical clearance of 13'-6".

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- Structure has sufficient uniformly distributed and unobstructed openings throughout the top of the array (horizontal plane) to allow smoke, heat, and gases to freely escape vertically.

PV systems installed over parking spaces may be located no closer than 5 feet to property lines (real or imaginary) when of non-combustible construction. The following code requirements are not applicable:

- Fire Extinguishers per CFC Section 906; Exit Signs per CBC Section 1013; Emergency Lighting per CBC Section 1008.

### **6.2.5 Specific Requirements for Ground-Mounted PV Panel Support Structures with No Use Underneath**

Design and construction of ground-mounted PV installations with no use underneath are considered equipment structures and shall comply with the CBC and CFC and are subject to the fire separation distance requirements as prescribed in the CBC. Installations shall not be constructed within dedicated side yards (building frontage) used for allowable area determination for new or existing buildings.

**Exception:** PV arrays supported on non-combustible framing may be installed in dedicated frontage areas when the size does not exceed 1/3 of the horizontal projected area of the frontage space.

- Shall not be located in dedicated fire apparatus access roadways.
- When of non-combustible construction, may be located adjacent to property lines (real or imaginary).
- Shall be fenced around the perimeter to prohibit general access.
- Fences shall include a gate for maintenance personnel and emergency access.
- Gate(s) shall be equipped with a security type 'break-away' lock, or be of the 'Knox Lock' type or other locking system as approved by the local fire authority.
- When located in a 'field', a minimum 10-foot clearance around the perimeter free from vegetation shall be provided and maintained.

### **6.2.6 Requirements for PV Panel Installations Over a Roof Assembly**

**6.2.6.1** Design and construction of rooftop mounted solar system installations shall comply with CBC provisions.

**6.2.6.2** Elevated PV panel system structures with a PV system installed over a roof assembly shall have a fire classification as outlined in Section 6.2.2 above.

**6.2.6.3** Roof-mounted solar frame systems shall be designed to include roof access and pathways with spacing in accordance with CFC Section 1205.

### **6.2.7 Battery Energy Storage Systems**

For buildings that require solar photovoltaic systems per the California Energy Code, battery energy storage systems (BESS) may also be required per CEC Section 140.10 (b). When provided, BESS shall be designed and installed in accordance with CFC Section 1207, NFPA 855, and DSA IR N-4, *Modular Battery Energy Storage Systems*.

### **6.2.8 Electrical Requirements**

## SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

All provisions found in the California Electric Code (CEC) for PV systems shall apply. These CEC provisions include, but are not limited to, Articles 250, 310, 690 and 705. Appendix A of this IR provides an example of a PV system grounding.

The interconnection, operating and metering requirements for generation facilities which are to be connected to a utility's distribution system, over which the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has jurisdiction, shall comply with Rule 21. The School District must be the named customer on the utility account whether connection is through the school house meter or a separate meter dedicated to the proposed project.

### 6.2.9 Guard Requirements

The guard requirements of CBC Section 1015.6 for mechanical equipment near roof edges do not apply to solar panel arrays.

## 7. SOLAR PROJECT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

All projects involving installation of PV or solar thermal systems shall have a California licensed architect or structural engineer in general responsible charge per CAC Section 4-316.



Applications for project review shall be submitted to the applicable DSA Regional Office, following the normal process for project submittal. Form *DSA-3: Project Submittal Checklist* is a guide to the information required for a complete submittal.

In addition to the above requirements, the following items are also required for a complete submittal for DSA review:

**7.1** Construction plans and specifications shall be signed and stamped by the architect or structural engineer in general responsible charge per *IR A-19: Design Professional Stamp (Seal) and Signature on Documents*. The architect or structural engineer in general responsible charge may use construction plans and specifications prepared by the manufacturer's California licensed engineer provided the requirements of *IR A-18: Use of Construction Documents Prepared by Other Design Professionals*, are met. It is acceptable for design details of rooftop PV support frame systems and anchorage to be included on the mechanical or electrical plans when they are signed by the appropriate California licensed mechanical or electrical engineer if the details have been coordinated with the California licensed civil or structural engineer responsible for providing calculations to support the design of the system. Plans and details for freestanding PV panel support structures must be presented on drawings stamped and signed by a California licensed structural engineer.

**7.2** The plans and specifications shall include all solar system requirements identified in Section 1.2 above, including anchorage or restraint details of the panels, BOS equipment, support structures, and foundations. Fully detail all support frame and anchor system components (e.g., rails, connectors, angles, stanchions, trays, expansion joints, etc.) on the plans.

**7.3** Calculations to verify that the primary structure will support the additional vertical and lateral loads from the panels and BOS equipment. Provide calculations verifying that roof deflection will not cause ponding, and calculations for the racking system components, attachment to the structure, other structural connections necessary to resist the applicable loads.

**7.4** Submit wind tunnel, shake table and friction test reports, non-linear time history analysis, and other reports and calculations, as applicable.

### 7.5 Deferred Submittals

## SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

This section describes the deferred submittal requirements for installations on new buildings. Deferred submittals shall not be permitted for installations on existing buildings, nor for any system utilizing the wind tunnel procedure or other design basis which is outside of the recognized methods in ASCE 7 Section 29.4.3 or 29.4.4.

**7.5.1** PV Systems supported on a structural framework: Permitted; the PV system shall be designed using ASCE 7 Section 29.4.3 on a low slope roof (<= 7 degrees) or Section 29.4.4 as applies for systems that meet the requirements of that section. The PV System shall be supported on a framework of stanchions and members that are fully designed and detailed on the approved plans with adequate weather and fire protection included. The design loads impacting the building design shall be clearly noted on the approved plans and details. In addition, the approved plans must show the number of panels, array layout, tilt angle, dimensions, and rail locations that support the panels. The design and detailing of the rail to framework attachment, rails, panel clips, and panels are permitted to be deferred.

**7.5.2** PV systems attached to Standing Seam Metal Roof (SSMR) systems: Permitted; the design must comply with ASCE 7 Section 29.4.4. The attachment of the SSMR panels to the roof structure shall be fully designed and detailed on the approved plans per Section 5.1.1.1 above, and the approved plans show the number of panels, array layout, dimensions, rail locations, seam connecting locations and spacing, and field quality control testing requirements. The design and detailing of the seam connecting devices, rails, panel clips, and panels are permitted to be deferred.

**7.5.3** Ballasted PV systems: Not permitted as deferred submittal.

**7.5.4** All other systems: Not permitted as deferred submittal.

### 8. GLOSSARY

#### **Balance-of-System (BOS) Equipment**

Includes solar support frame systems, anchoring devices, DC-to-AC inverters, electrical wiring, electrical protection, monitoring, and safety equipment. In certain applications, the BOS equipment may also include the factory-assembled primary structural framing or structure.

#### **Ballasted Solar PV Systems**

Ballasted solar PV arrays are systems that rely on weight and friction to resist wind and seismic forces and typically have no (or very few) mechanical attachments to the roof structure.

#### **Building-Integrated Photovoltaic (BIPV) Roof Covering Systems**

As defined in ICC-ES AC365, a BIPV roof panel is an integrated, manufactured assembly consisting of the PV laminate and other factory-assembled components, including its integrated support structure, with interlocking or overlapping edges. BIPV roof covering systems include solar modules, shingles and panels that are attached to the roof by mechanical fasteners or affixed by adhesive.

#### **Freestanding PV Panel Support Structures**

This category includes both the CBC-defined *Photovoltaic (PV) Support Structure, Elevated*, as structures with minimum clear height of 7'-6" with use underneath, and *Photovoltaic (PV) Panel Systems, Ground Mounted* as those installed directly on the ground without use underneath.

#### **Solar Systems**

The term "solar systems" is used in this IR when referring generically to solar PV panel systems, solar thermal panel systems, and BIPV roof covering systems.

## SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

### Support Frame Systems

The term “support frame systems” is used generically in this IR to refer to structural framing systems designed by the responsible project design professional (see Section 7 above) or prefabricated rack-mounted frame assemblies from a manufacturer to support solar PV panel and solar thermal systems that are anchored to primary structure or foundation. Support frame systems can be mounted parallel to roof slope or foundation or can be at inclined angles to the roof slope or foundation. Where requirements are provided for a particular solar frame system, that system is specifically identified.

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### REFERENCES:

California Education Code, Section 17282.5

2025 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24

    Part 1: California Administrative Code (CAC)

    Part 2: California Building Code (CBC), Sections 1609A, and 1613A

    Part 3: California Electrical Code (CEC), Articles 250, 310, 690 and 705

Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC)

    SEAOC Report PV1-2012: Structural Seismic Requirements and Commentary for Rooftop Solar PV Arrays

    SEAOC Report PV2-2017: Wind Design for Solar Arrays

    SEAOC Report PV3-2019: Gravity Design for Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Arrays

Underwriter Laboratories (UL)

    UL 1703: Flat-Plate Photovoltaic Modules and Panels

    UL 2703: Mounting Systems, Mounting Devices, Clamping/Retention Devices, and Ground Lugs for Use with Flat-Plate Photovoltaic Modules and Panels

    UL 61730-1: Photovoltaic (PV) Module Safety Qualification – Part 1: Requirements for Construction

    UL 61730-2: Photovoltaic (PV) Module Safety Qualification – Part 2: Requirements for Testing

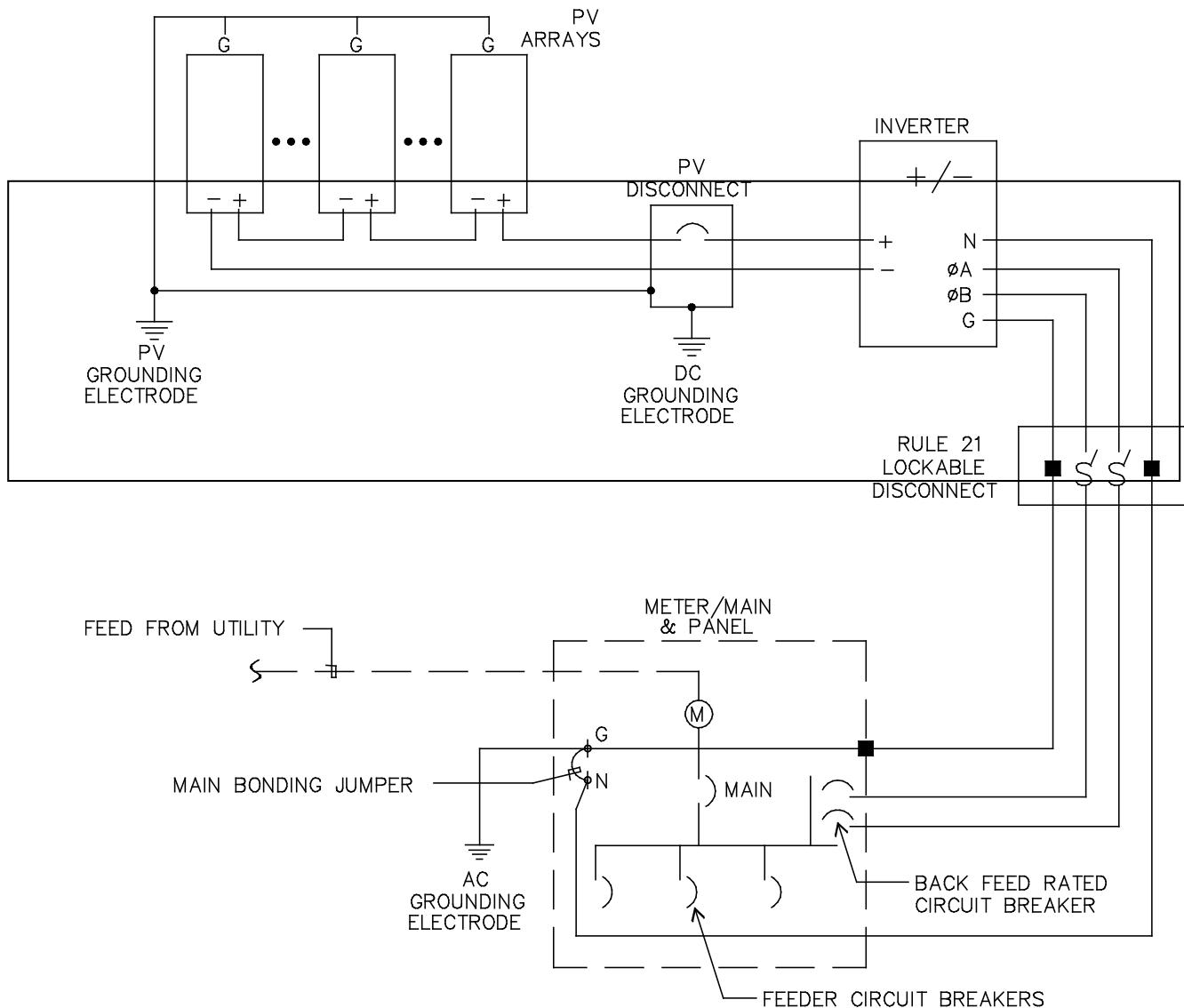
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This IR is intended for use by DSA staff and by design professionals to promote statewide consistency for review and approval of plans and specifications as well as construction oversight of projects within the jurisdiction of DSA, which includes State of California public schools (K-12), community colleges and state-owned or state-leased essential services buildings. This IR indicates an acceptable method for achieving compliance with applicable codes and regulations, although other methods proposed by design professionals may be considered by DSA.

This IR is subject to revision at any time. Please check DSA's website for currently effective IRs. Only IRs listed on the webpage at [www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/publications](http://www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa/publications) at the time of project application submittal to DSA are considered applicable.

**SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL  
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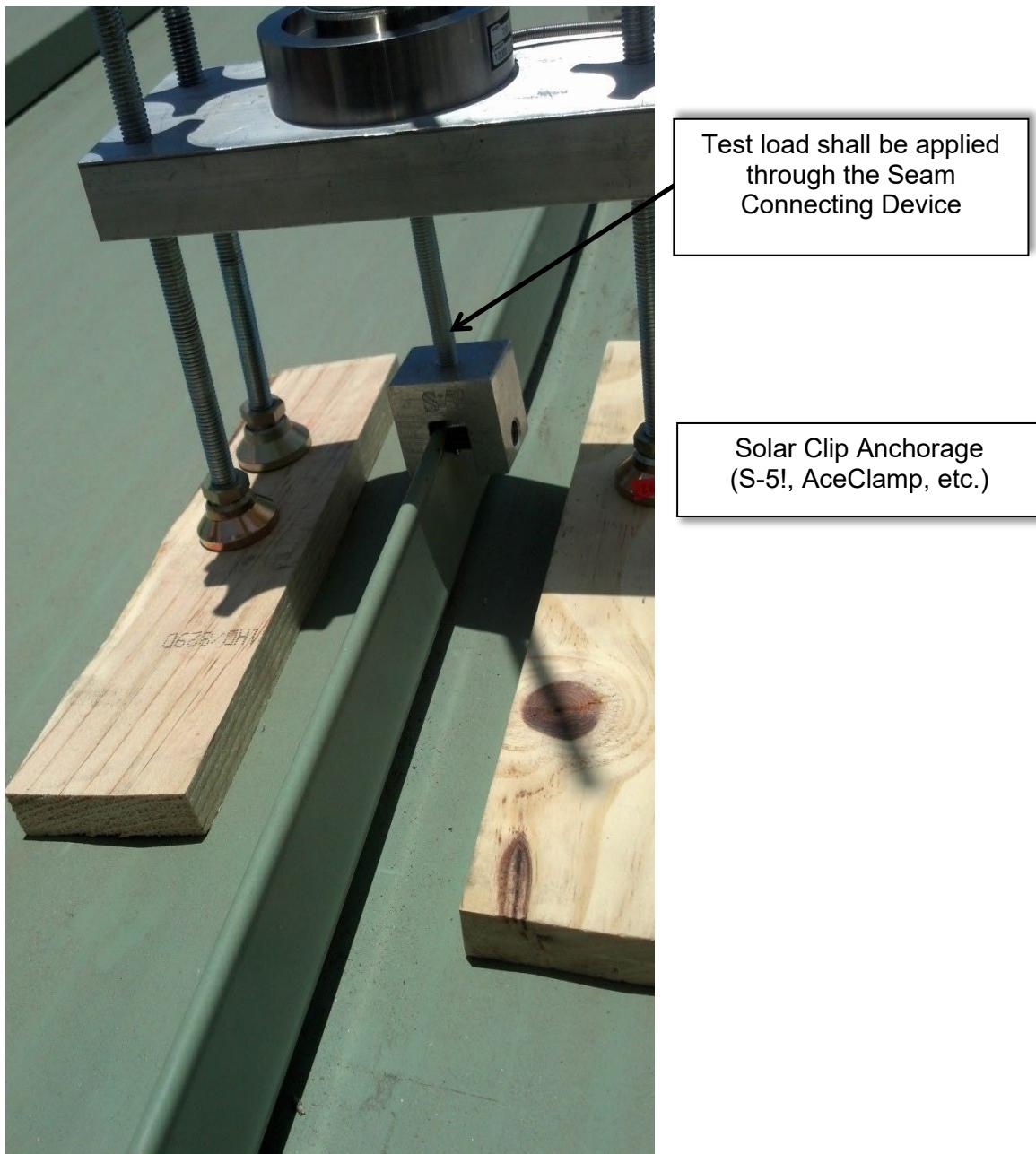
**APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF PV SYSTEM GROUNDING**



**SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL  
REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC****APPENDIX B: STANDING SEAM METAL ROOF (SSMR) FIELD TESTING**

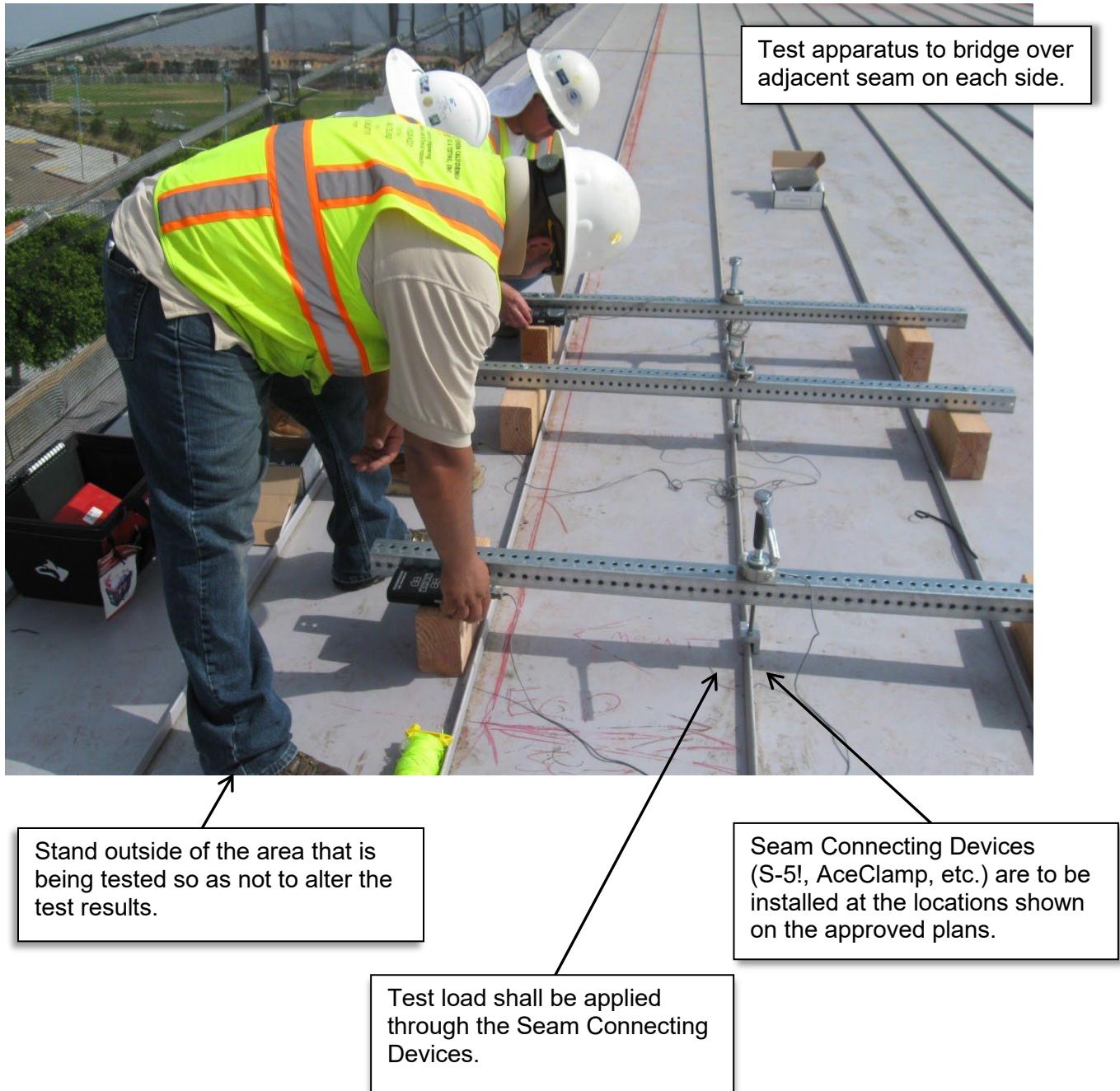
**Photograph #1:** Example of Test Apparatus for SSMR Seam Connection Devices on New SSMR Systems

- (1) Validate the capacity values of the Seam Connecting Device to be utilized for design as required per Section 5.1.2.1 above.
- (2) Field Installation Quality Control Test of installed Device on a New Roof per Section 5.1.3.1 above.



## SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

**Photograph #2:** Example of Field Installation Quality Control Test on Existing SSMR Systems and Seam Connection Devices as required per Section 5.1.3.2 above.



**SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL  
REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC****APPENDIX C: LOWEST AVERAGE MONTHLY LOW TEMPERATURE**

City	Lowest Average Monthly Low Temp.(°F)
Bakersfield	39
Big Bear	21
Chico	35
Fresno	38
Hesperia	31
Lake Arrowhead	30
Los Angeles	47
Mammoth	20
Modesto	40
Palm Springs	44
Palmdale	34
Redding	36
Ridgecrest	31
Sacramento	38
San Francisco	46
San Luis Obispo	43
Santa Rosa	39
Truckee	15

\*Source: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

# SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC AND THERMAL SYSTEMS REVIEW AND APPROVAL

## REQUIREMENTS: 2025 CBC

### APPENDIX D: EXAMPLE FORM DSA 103

**D1. Form DSA 103, Section X03:** Sample Special Line Item for PV Panel Fasteners to SSMR (Refer to Section 5.1.3 above).

X   OTHER	TYPE	BY
<input type="checkbox"/> X01: Product Load Test*	Test	LOR
<input type="checkbox"/> X02: Non-HSB Installation Torque	Continuous	SI*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X03: PV Panel	Test	LOR
<input type="checkbox"/> X04: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X05: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X06: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X07: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X08: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X09: Not used.	N/A	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> X10: Not used.	N/A	N/A

### Appendix: LIST OF STRUCTURAL TESTS AND SPECIAL INSPECTIONS

X1. OTHER:	
Test or Special Inspection	Code References and Notes
X01.   Load test for identified product(s):	1709A.2, 1709A.3. Testing is not required for: 1) a product with a valid evaluation service report per DSA IR A-5, or 2) a product that can be justified by structural calculation.
X02.   Installation torque for non-HS bolts on communication tower identified as essential service facility projects (ESFP).	Calibrated wrench use required, verified by SI during installation. DSA Policy PL 18-01: Communication Towers, Poles and Buildings Utilized by State Agencies for Essential Services Communications. *EXCEPTION: Non-ESFP may use PI without need for notification to DSA
X03.   PV Panel Clip	DSA IR 16-8, Section 5.1.3.