

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

1516 NINTH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-5512
www.energy.ca.gov



January 26, 2005

Dear Solar Schools Program Awardee,

This letter is to remind all Solar Schools Program (SSP) awardees of the Emerging Renewables Program (ERP) requirements pertaining to the Special Funding for Public and Charter Schools [pp. 22-25 in the *ERP Guidebook, July 2004 Edition*]. The ERP requires a building permit and final inspection signoff to be submitted prior to the expiration date of the rebate to qualify for payment. Since the SSP pertains to public schools, the permit and approval process falls under the authority of the Division of State Architect (DSA). Awardees risk forfeiture of their rebate if all required ERP documents, including the DSA plan approval and final certification letters are not provided prior to the expiration date of their reservation.

Some SSP awardees have turned in payment claims without the proper DSA approval of their PV projects. In some cases, the SSP awardees have claimed that their PV projects are exempt from DSA approval because of the project's size, the school district's assumption of liability, or the apparent approval of a local jurisdiction such as a county building department. ERP staff recently met with DSA officials and confirmed that no such exemptions exist for these schools. DSA confirmed that only it can provide the permit and final approval for public school construction and modification projects involving the installation of PV systems contemplated and funded under the SSP. Local jurisdictions do not have authority to approve these or other construction or modification projects on public schools. According to DSA, all public schools and school districts should be fully aware of this.

Information concerning DSA's approval process is available on DSA's website: [www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov]. This website is user-friendly and has step-by-step planning and approval process information. DSA has forms and documents which are required in their plan approval and final certification process. It is your responsibility to obtain DSA approval for your entire PV project.

In summary, schools must submit project plans which include structural and electrical plans that have been stamp approved by a licensed electrical engineer. DSA fees are based on the actual cost of the school's PV project which can be corroborated with the documentation provided to the ERP. DSA issues an application number which can be used online to track project progress. Upon approval of the project plans, DSA will issue an "Approval of Plans" letter. DSA's final approval is the "Certification and Close of File" letter, which is issued by DSA once the project has been completed.

SSP awardees must submit a copy of the "Approval of Plans" letter and "Certification and Close of File" letter for the entire project to the ERP when submitting a payment

request. ERP staff then can confirm that the final project approved by DSA is the same project for which SSP funds will be paid. Samples of these DSA letters are attached for your information.

In order to expedite DSA review and approval, ERP staff encourages schools to contact their regional DSA office and submit complete applications for their PV projects as soon as possible. This should be done prior to completing their PV projects, but may be done afterwards as well. If you have any questions concerning the DSA approval process, please contact DSA directly. For your convenience, a list of regional DSA offices is provided below:

DSA Headquarters Office

Richard T. Conrad
Acting State Architect of California
1102 Q Street, Suite 5100, Sacramento, California 95814
916/445-8100

DSA San Francisco Bay Area Regional Office

1515 Clay Street, Suite 1201, Oakland, California 94612
510/622-3101

DSA Sacramento Regional Office

1102 Q Street, Suite 5200, Sacramento, California 95814
916/445-8730

DSA Los Angeles Basin Regional Office

311 South Spring Street, Suite 1301, Los Angeles, California 90013
213/897-3995

DSA San Diego Regional Office

16680 West Bernardo Drive, San Diego, California 92127
858/674-5400

Please contact the DSA if you need more clarification regarding their requirements. For questions regarding the ERP rebate requirements, please call the ERP Call Center: (800) 555-7794.

Sincerely,

Marija Krapceovich
Renewable Energy Program
(916) 654-4180

Enclosures