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## DOE officially rolls out online solar permitting tool for local governments

By Chris Crowell    July 15, 2021    [VIEW PROFILE](#)



The United States Department of Energy announced today the official launch of SolarAPP+, the online [permitting platform](#) developed by the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to accelerate approval of solar projects. The SolarAPP+ platform will cut the time and expense of going solar in the United States: national data shows that local governments that use instant online permitting for rooftop solar projects can process 5–14 times more applications than jurisdictions with traditional permit processing. [Here's our most recent feature on how it was developed and how it works.](#)

Deep cycle lead-acid batteries are the most-recycled consumer product in North America. Delivering proven performance, flooded models continue to be the most affordable energy storage solutions for residential off-grid & backup systems. [Browse the Rolls catalog here](#)

Speed means a lot here. Solar customers will save money, while solar installers will have more clarity about the process, get more projects done, and contribute more to their local economies. SolarAPP+ also helps local government officials who will be able to rely on quality assurance processes built into the online application tool with input from code and safety experts at organizations like Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the International Code Council (ICC), and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

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Now, jurisdictions need to adopt it.

"By adopting SolarAPP+, cities can ramp up more solar in their communities, while improving the quality and safety of their permitting process. It will lead to more happy solar customers, less pollution, more jobs, and more local economic benefits," said Andrew Birch and Anne Hoskins, Co-

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Chairs of the SolarAPP+ Campaign. "We're excited to work with local officials and other stakeholders to advance this important new national standard and to advance the benefits of this new tool."

To that end, a national group of solar companies, state solar energy associations, clean energy advocates, and environmental organizations in launching [The SolarAPP+ Campaign](#) to raise awareness and promote adoption of the platform. The SolarAPP+ Campaign supports state solar associations with a goal of getting more than 100 jurisdictions to adopt the new national standard by Summer 2022.

[NYSEIA](#) was one of the first to jump on this. The NYSEIA SolarAPP+ campaign, for example, takes a multi-prong approach to improving rooftop solar permitting in New York:

- Adoption of SolarAPP+ in key Long Island jurisdictions that currently have a backlog in solar permits;
- Adoption of "no-touch" permitting practices, including online and email application submissions, online and phone-based payment, and acceptance of electronic signatures;
- Granting of conditional building permits; and
- Allowing self-certification.

"Reducing administrative burdens for solar companies and their customers would expedite the process of installing solar and therefore reduce costs," said Tara McDermott, Director of Stakeholder Relations at EmPower Solar and Chairperson of NYSEIA's Long Island Solar & Storage Alliance. "A typical solar company on Long Island can spend a minimum of 10 staff-hours on permitting for each solar project, often waiting weeks for approval from some municipalities. By automating, standardizing, and digitizing the process, SolarAPP+ has the potential to save solar companies hundreds of hours each year completing paperwork, verifying code compliance, driving from town to town to file permits, disputing objections from building departments, resubmitting, picking up approved plans, and ultimately, finalizing a client's building permit."



Tags: [New York](#), [permitting](#), [SEIA](#), [SolarAPP](#)

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## Microsoft signs PPA with Volt Energy that also invests in underserved community

By [Chris Crowell](#) July 20, 2021

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# Volt Energy



As [Volt Energy's](#) first environmental justice and renewable energy initiative, the national minority-owned solar energy development firm will supply Microsoft with 250 MW of utility-scale solar energy to support Microsoft's goal of 100 percent renewable energy supply for all its operations by 2025. In addition, Volt Energy and Microsoft will invest a portion of the revenue from the PPA in community impact funding initiatives, which will support programs that bring the benefits of renewable energy to communities not typically included in clean energy initiatives.

Deep cycle lead-acid batteries are the most-recycled consumer product in North America. Delivering proven performance, flooded models continue to be the most affordable energy storage solutions for residential off-grid & backup systems.

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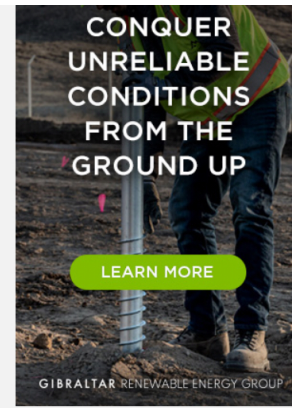
"It is critically important that clean energy infrastructure and economic development investments are made in underserved minority and rural communities that have been disproportionately impacted by environmental injustices and lag behind in the health and financial benefits of the thriving clean energy economy," said Volt Energy's co-founder and CEO, Gilbert Campbell. "It is equally important to provide access to the business and job creation benefits of the clean energy movement. We look forward to working with Microsoft to identify and invest in community initiatives to create more inclusive economic opportunities."

This agreement advances Microsoft and Volt's mutual commitment to deliver the benefits of renewable energy to diverse and historically underserved communities.

"With Volt Energy, we are able to scale the impact of our renewable energy projects by working together to address environmental equity issues, ranging from renewable energy access to workforce training among underserved urban and rural communities," said Noelle Walsh, CVP, Cloud Operations + Innovation, Microsoft.

With a mission to uplift communities through opportunities and benefits provided by clean energy, Volt Energy develops, finances, and operates utility-scale, community solar, and distributed generation solar projects. Volt Energy is an ESG driven renewable energy company that partners with public and private sector clients to assist with the convergence of carbon goals, diversity, equity and inclusion, and other ESG goals.

Tags: [Microsoft](#), [Volt Energy](#)



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By SB Staff July 20, 2021

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[CleanCapital](#) and [Borrego](#) have partnered to construct a 6.7 MW distributed generation solar project in Maine, which is expected to reach commercial operation in 2022. Thanks to [Maine's Net Energy Billing kWh Program](#), power will be sold to residential off-takers at a fixed discount to the prevailing utility rate for a 20-year term.

"We are excited to be partnering for the first time with Borrego to make renewable energy more



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