ONLINE PERMITTING

An online permitting system can save your municipality, as well as contractors resources, time and money. There are many options to choose from for online permitting and there is a wide range in the functionality offered. Ideally, online permitting software should be able to do most or all of the following:

- Handle rooftop solar PV permitting as well as other types of permitting.
- Provide download options for needed forms such as the **Connecticut Standardized Solar PV Permit Application Package.**
- Include an upload option for completed permit applications.
- Offer an interactive workflow for inspections, notifications and next steps.
- Display approval-status information.
- Provide downloadable approval documents.
- Help your municipality store and track permit application information and documents.
- Be user friendly, with clear instructions on how to use the system.
- Ideally, allow for online payments to jurisdictions when a permit fee is required.

Online permitting systems can bring efficiency to permitting processes across jurisdictions. Clearer, easier processes allow installers and municipalities to handle higher volumes of permit requests, and allow for more residents and businesses to benefit from clean energy. More generally, online permitting can allow a municipality to increase business and help its community prosper.

The following examples of online permitting systems are in place or are being developed for use in Connecticut and across the country:

Connecticut's Rooftop Solar Challenge Partner:

Simply Civic is a U.S. Department of Energy SunShot Incubator Program Round 6 and Round 8 awardee. The company has developed a software solution designed to reduce solar PV soft costs arising from administrative processes at the municipal level.

Simply Civic provides jurisdictions with a simple, fast and affordable online permitting solution for solar PV (and other types of permitting). The online platform allows permit applicants and building department staff to seamlessly collaborate during the permit application, review and approval processes. Benefits to municipal staff and installers include reduction or elimination of phone calls, emails and the travelling expenses incurred when in-person visits are required to submit, review, and sometimes resubmit paperwork. Additionally, Simply Civic stores and tracks permit applications, easing staff workloads. New features continue to be developed and implemented to enhance the functionality of the platform.

> Simply Civic, a Rooftop Solar Challenge partner, has developed an online permitting software system available to CT municipalities to pilot for free through 2014

Simply Civic is contributing to the CT Rooftop Solar Challenge goal of making online permitting an option for any of Connecticut's 169 municipalities, including those with limited resources. Connecticut is encouraging municipalities to consider adoption of the system by first piloting the system free of charge through the end of calendar year 2014. To learn more about Simply Civic or if you are ready to "test drive" online permitting, contact the Connecticut Rooftop Solar Challenge team at sunshot@ctcleanenergy.com or info@simplycivic.com. You can also view Simply Civic's website, http://simplycivic.com.

Permitting systems currently in use by Connecticut municipalities:

ViewPermit serves as the online permitting platform for a number of Connecticut jurisdictions.[26] The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) acquired state support for a group of Connecticut towns to work with the company ViewPoint and help develop the ViewPermit system to meet each town's specific needs. Other Connecticut towns have since purchased the ViewPermit platform.

ViewPoint provides an enterprise-level, customized permitting solution called ViewPermit. As explained on its website:
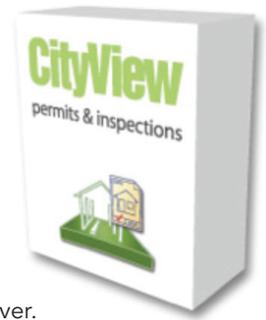
Incorporated in 1995, ViewPoint is a highly trained group of professionals with extensive experience solving the complex problems facing communities and government agencies today. We utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS), enterprise databases, graphic design, and state of-the-art computer hardware and software to provide practical, cost-effective solutions for daily operations, as well as the most challenging projects.

ViewPoint offers the following process solutions to local governments:

• Cost-effective, time-saving solutions

• Reliable, easy-to-use software

• Creative problem solving

• Responsive approach to clients

• Prompt, comprehensive support

• Thorough on-site training

A few Connecticut towns use CityView's online permitting system. MSGovern web designers provide an informative website with a free demo. They describe CityView's key points this way:

The Power of CityView Permits & Inspections:

• Improve customer service with real-time status reports that can be accessed by staff or online by applicants via the CityView Portal.

• Automatically assign and schedule inspections and abolish time-consuming manual scheduling forever.

• Manage and track your permits in a central location. Everything you need to know about a permit from owner and contractor information to related sub permits, utility releases to expiration dates, is instantly available and readily accessible by all departments.

• Streamline your business processes with your tailored workflows that allow you to define deadlines and automatically create next steps like plan checks and inspections ensuring that all components of a permit application are completed in the correct order and the complete status information is available at any point in time.

• Eliminate inaccurate fee collection with an integrated fees module that allows you to configure, calculate and collect fees using even the most complex fee structure.

• Easily manage drawdown of deposits, bonds and escrows and receive notifications when specified limits are reached.

• Make informed decisions with intuitive reports that allow you to quickly and easily assess the status of all permits and inspections, their related fees and the length of time they have existed in the system.

> If your jurisdiction already uses an online permitting system, consider adopting the CT Standardized Solar PV Permit Application for use through your online portal

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[26] Towns using ViewPermit are listed on the permitting portal's homepage https://www.viewmypermitct.org/TownSelection.aspx

EnerGov is a planning, permitting and licensing software platform developed by Tyler Technologies.

Energov uses GIS technology to facilitate municipal processes. The company describes the benefits of its software as follows:

From planning, permitting and licensing to asset management and citizen requests, our industry-leading EnerGov platform uses GIS to automate and centrally connect critical processes, streamline workflow, improve communication and increase productivity from desk to field.

EnerGov is specifically designed to automate and centrally connect critical processes, including land use planning and project review, regulatory management, inspections, code enforcement, citizen requests, asset management, work order management and more.

EnerGov empowers public sector jurisdictions across the country by:

• Harnessing the power of GIS

• Integrating departments and agencies

• Actively engaging citizens

• Improving operations desk to field

• Creating efficient workflow

• Creating powerful reports

Other Permitting software systems in use nationwide:

Listed in "Tucson's Rooftop Solar Challenge, Best Practices to Develop Solar Energy Study," and used in many cities across the country, CRW Systems Trakit offers another choice for an online permitting system. CRW describes their products and services as Community Development Software & Service Solutions including code enforcement, permitting, planning, and expert services.

MIXNET's efilePX is a cloud-based permit manager software system with no upfront hardware or software costs. The system is transaction based which means municipal payments are based on the number of permits the system processes.

Mygov offers modular software programs that handle a variety of municipal processes including permitting. Mygov's permitting module facilitates permit administration from initial submission to final inspection.