

NOVATO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT FIRE LOSS MANAGEMENT DIVISION



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Fire Protection Standard 523

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SUPPLY SYSTEMS

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Page: 1 of 1

This Standard has been developed pursuant to the California Fire Code as adopted by ordinance by the Novato Fire Protection District. It is intended that this standard be used as a guide for installation and placement of appurtenances associated with solar photovoltaic systems in order to provide firefighter safety.

The use of an electrical power supply, including but not limited to; photovoltaic, wind, and geothermal, other than that provided by the local public utility company or provider, shall be in accordance with this standard and Article 690 of the National Electric Code, 2005 Edition.

1. The electrical service disconnect for the alternative power supply shall be located within 8 feet (measured horizontally) from the P. G. & E. electrical service disconnect on the same or an adjacent exterior wall. The system disconnect shall be accessible to emergency personnel from the exterior without the use of ladders or other special equipment.
2. The following wording shall be placed on a permanent sign attached at the main electrical disconnect from P.G. & E. The sign shall be red background with white letters or a white background with red letters. Sign shall be a minimum size 2-1/2" X 6" with minimum 40 point font lettering. See Figure 1 for example.

Figure 1.

WARNING:
This building supplied with an alternative power source. Alternate disconnect is located:
(describe location - to the right, below etc.)
of this main disconnect. Both must be "Off" to disconnect building power supply.

3. A durable and permanent sign shall be located directly below the alternative power supply disconnect stating "Alternative Power Disconnect". The sign shall be red with white lettering and shall have minimum 40 point font letters.
4. All wiring that may contain electrical potential when the alternate service disconnect has been activated, (such as the wiring between the solar arrays and the DC electrical disconnect on a photovoltaic system) shall be completely contained in metal conduit.
5. The alternate energy supply system construction and materials shall be of equal or greater fire resistive and class rating as required for roofs and walls.
6. Solar Panels shall not be placed on roof locations that will impede fire service emergency operations including but not limited to: laddering; access to chimney outlets; and vertical venting operations.