

# STATEMENT TO

## **ASSEMBLY, No. 266**

with Assembly Floor Amendments  
(Proposed by Assemblyman Schroeder)

ADOPTED: MAY 24, 2012

Assembly Bill No. 266 requires that an identifying emblem displaying the letters “S/P” be placed next to the main entrance of a building if solar panels are attached to the roof of that building. In addition, the bill requires that all existing and newly constructed buildings that have solar panels be equipped with an external shut-off switch. The purpose of this bill is to protect the safety of firefighters who respond to an emergency call at a home that has solar panels.

When solar panel systems are deactivated they can still retain residual voltage within the system which presents a potential electric hazard to firefighters who are attempting to enter a burning building. These Assembly amendments clarify that technology capable of de-energizing residual voltage be required on all solar panel systems that are installed after the bill’s effective date. Solar panel systems installed prior to the effective date of the bill are not required to be equipped with de-energizing technology because the technology does not yet exist to properly retro-fit certain older systems.

In addition, these Assembly amendments require a municipal issuing authority, within ten days of issuing a permit approving the installation or alteration of a solar panel system for residential and nonresidential property, to file a copy of the permit with the local fire department. The amendments also require the owner of any residential or nonresidential structure who has a solar panel installed either prior to or after the bill’s effective date to notify the local fire department in writing. The notification is to include the name of the property owners, the address of the property, and information concerning whether the solar panel system is equipped with the technology capable of de-energizing residual voltage in the solar panel system after the system has been deactivated. The amendments also require that the local fire department be informed of the location of an external shut-off switch if applicable, and the year that the solar panel system was installed.

Information that a fire department receives by permit or written notification is to be maintained in a registry. The amendments provide that the purpose of the registry is to alert firefighters, when responding to an emergency situation, that a residential or nonresidential structure is equipped with a solar panel system and that reasonable precautions may be necessary when responding to the emergency.

Finally, these amendments limit the requirement that a identifying emblem displaying the letters “S/P” to non-residential commercial buildings. The owners of residential structures are exempt from this requirement.