

## New Law Addresses Fire Safety Concerns For Roof Mounted Solar Panels in New Jersey

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Roof mounted solar panels on a burning building can present unique challenges to firefighters, including the danger of electric shock as well as inhalation exposure from solar battery fumes. To help address these concerns, Governor Christie signed Assembly Bill A-266 (S-507) into law on January 17, 2014.

The new law requires that notice of the existence of roof mounted solar panels be provided, particularly to firefighters, so that they are alerted to the need for additional precautions when responding to a fire at such a building.

The requirements of the new law include that the Commissioner of Community Affairs, pursuant to the Uniform Fire Safety Act, promulgate rules to require that all structures (except for one or two family residences) with photovoltaic roof mounted solar panels have an "identifying emblem" affixed to the building.

Additionally, the law provides that all municipal agencies that issue permits for roof mounted solar panels must provide a copy of the permit to the local fire official within 10 days of issuance. Building owners of structures with roof mounted panels are similarly required to provide written notice to the local fire official.

We will keep you advised regarding promulgation of the new rules.

If you have any questions about this law or other issues related to solar development, please contact **Maura E. Blau** or **Jack Fersko**, authors of this Alert.

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