



**CEESP Goal 1: WHPA Compliance Online Permitting Working Group
Teleconference Summary Notes
Monday, May 8, 2017
Scheduled for 9:00am – 10:00m PDT**

Call to Order

Committee Chair Allison Paul (CHF-CIRB) called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. PDT. The meeting audio was recorded.

Roll Call

WHPA Staff (Wendy Worrell) conducted roll call based on the current WHPA Online Permitting Working Group roster. As no voting panel has been assigned in favor of consensus voting, members are organized by voting eligibility status. The meeting was attended by 17 participants (or proxies) as clarified in the following table. A quorum (8+) of eligible members was reached.

Organization	First Name	Last Name	WHPA Category	Attendance
Voting Eligible				
ACCA (Air Conditioning Contractors of America)	Todd	Washam	Contractor Association	A
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Mark	Meyers	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P
CalCERTS, Inc.	Charlie	Bachand	Certifying Body	A
CalCERTS, Inc. (standing Proxy)	Susan	Davison	Certifying Body	A
CEC (California Energy Commission)	Judy	Roberson	Government (Other than CPUC)	P
CHEERS	Bob	Johnson	Certifying Body	A
CHF-CIRB (California Homebuilding Foundation, Construction Industry Research Board)	Allison	Paul	Research Organization	P (Chair)
DNV GL – Energy	Amber	Watkins	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	A
Duct Testers	Dave	Hegarty	Other Stakeholder	P
Enalasy	Eric	Taylor	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
Enalasy (standing Proxy)	Michael	Thompson	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
EnerGtech Experts	Brent	Locke	Other Stakeholder	P
The Energy CA, LLC	Eric	Beriault	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
Energy Cloud Inc.	John	Carrieri	Other Stakeholder	A
IHACI (Institute of Heating and Air Conditioning Industries)	Bob	Wiseman	Contractor Association	P
Indio Cooling & Heating Supply	Tim	Mann	Distributor	P
SCE (Southern California Edison)	Gary	Shushnar	California IOU	P
Not Voting Eligible				
CBIA (California Building Industry Association)**	Bob	Raymer+	Codes & Standard Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	A
USERA	Don	Charles+	Third Party Quality Assurance Providers	P
PG&E (Pacific Gas and Electric Company)	Jill	Marver	California IOU	A
SDG&E (San Diego Gas & Electric)	Jeremy	Reefe	California IOU	P
SDG&E (San Diego Gas & Electric)	Paul	Thomas	California IOU	A
Guests				
CALBO (California Building Officials)	Bob	Barks	Codes & Standards Official (Association or Jurisdiction)	P (Compliance Chair)
CHEERS	Jim	Hodgson+	Certifying Body	A
CSE (Center for Sustainable Energy)	Marcus	Gilmore+	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	P (Speaker)
WHPA Staff				
CLEAResult	Paul	Kyllo	Other Stakeholder	P (Work Product)
Empowered Solutions	Shea	Dibble	Energy Efficiency Program Consultant	A (Monthly Report)
InfoPlast	Wendy	Worrell	Other Stakeholder	P (Host/Scribe)
Opinion Dynamics	Ellen	Steiner	Other Stakeholder	A (Surveys)

** Organization is Not a Member of the WHPA; + Individual is NOT Registered with the WHPA; (P) = Member Organization is Pending Approval from the WHPA Executive Committee.

Agenda

The following agenda was distributed to the Working Group by WHPA Staff prior to the meeting.

GENERAL REMINDERS

- Adherence to the WHPA **Code of Conduct** is required.
- Disclose any potential conflicts of interest as it relates to meeting content, particularly prior to any votes that may occur.
- Identify yourself prior to speaking, clarifying the organization on whose behalf you are speaking, or if you are making a personal comment.
- Mute yourself when not speaking. (*6 will take you on and off mute.)



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AGENDA ITEMS

- 1) **Roll Call** – WHPA Staff – 5 min
- 2) **Overview Presentation: Impact of the California Solar Permitting Guidebook** – CSE (Marcus Gilmore) – 30 min
 - a) Presentation
 - b) Q&A
- 3) **Update: Best Practices Memo Progress** – Subgroup Lead (Eric Taylor) – 10 min
- 4) **Update: Contractor and Jurisdictional Surveys** – Chair & WHPA Staff – 10 min
- 5) **Meeting Next Steps Overview** – Chair - 5 min
 - a) Next Meeting: Monday, May 22nd from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT
 - i) **ACTION:** Enalays to provide the requested Green It Forward Online Permitting System – Statistics Report for best practices research.
- 6) **Adjournment** by 10:00am PDT – Chair (Allison Paul)

Prior Meeting Notes

The April 24, 2017 meeting minutes were email distributed to the roster for approval.

ACTION: WHPA Staff to post the final version of the April 24, 2017 meeting notes reflective of any received edits to the [WHPA Online Permitting Webpage](#).

Overview Presentation: Impact of the California Solar Permitting Guidebook

Marcus Gilmore (CSE) presented on the impact of their Rooftop Solar Challenge II: California Solar Permitting Guidebook Adoption Update. Key content beyond slide content follows:

Slide 3

Much of the work would not have been done without their partners, including CALBO.

Slide 4

Hard costs have come down tremendously but soft costs are still a barrier. Permitting is a way to help with that.

Slide 5

AB 2188 is essentially the Solar Rights Act.

Slide 6

Before AB 2188, CSE already worked with the Governor’s office about the California Solar Permitting Guidebook. One of the deliverables was to update the Guidebook. AB 2188 coincided with the work they were doing for the second version of the Guidebook. It took 9 months to update. They wanted to ensure the Guidebook and local resources could be used to comply with the AB 2188 requirements. The site shown is still active. It includes the toolkit, information about AB 2188 and workshops & training. The goal is to drive as many jurisdictions as possible and get as much online permitting activity as possible.

Slide 7

They did a lot of media outreach, including attendance at stakeholder events (CALBO included).

Slide 8

The lower left graphic shows the month after 6-8 months of outreach. The right map is as of last year. Green represents those who have adopted an ordinance as outlined in the Guidebook. Yellow represents those in process. Red represents those who had not adopted nor had anything in process. CSE’s award ended last year so there may be some differences since then.

Slide 9

The RSC III model ordinance is available on their website. They consider this to be a success but there is more work to do.

Slide 10

New York requested assistance with the adoption of unified solar permits as they were having difficulty with adoption. They hired CSE to help them with a guidebook similar to what was done in California.



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Slide 11

CSE is no longer actively involved with the California Solar Guidebook but there is an ongoing effort with the California Solar Energy Industries Association (CALSEIA) and the Governor’s Office of Planning in Research (OPR). Marcus Gilmore (CSE) can put those interested in touch with OPR contacts to learn more.

Q&A

Marcus Gilmore (CSE) clarified that AHJ stands for “Authorities Having Jurisdictions”.

In response to WHPA Staff inquiry about if improvements in permit compliance resulted from the Guidebook, Marcus Gilmore (CSE) clarified that before they developed the second edition of the Guidebook, their goal for the 3-year program for 14 jurisdictions they worked with to adopt best practices by program end was achieved in 2012. Marcus clarified that before the second edition and mostly the robust outreach driven by the State mandate, they would not have expected to see more than 14 jurisdictions in the State adopt the best practices. There were jurisdictions that already had online permitting, but the East Bay developed a process just for that region long before that Guidebook and AB 2188. The process that Berkeley and that region developed was used as a model for the Guidebook. There was no “stick” or mandate to drive interest prior to AB 2188.

- WHPA Staff asked if the solar industry had the same issues with permit compliance as the HVAC industry before the Guidebook.
- Marcus Gilmore (CSE) reported that since the Guidebook has been released, over 221 jurisdictions now have a more transparent process available on their website and that contractors understand how to use the process. He clarified that in the jurisdictions that have adopted the process or previously had a similar process in place, permitting has improved after the Guidebook. Marcus reported that they still receive complaints about non-compliance, but that those complaints are generated from AHJs that have not adopted the best practices. There is a big industry push for help and assistance from the State OPR to encourage those AHJs that are not yet compliant to consider the resources, make them available, and adopt those processes.
- Bob Wiseman (IHACI) clarified that solar is a bit different than HVAC because of the need to connect to the electrical grid so it is rare that a permit is not pulled. He noted that the similarity is with the AHJ’s adoption of permitting processes, etcetera.

In reply to Eric Taylor’s question about a streamlined statewide system, Marcus Gilmore (CSE) confirmed that it “is a dream”. They do not have a statewide permitting portal, but through the Guidebook, they have a list of forms and documents that could be used consistently throughout the state. They “would have loved to have 100% AHJ participation with implementation of the information in the Guidebook.” Marcus reported that some have basic presence like making a checklist available online, so contractors know what is available and understand the process to eliminate barriers in understanding the permitting requirements.

Mike Thompson (Enalasy) asked if time was done to determine if the costs noted on slide 4 were shown to reduce because of the Guidebook implementation.

- Marcus Gilmore (CSE) confirmed they do not have funding for that analysis at this point, but clarified that it is the next step. The need is to look at key variables both before the program and after. Their goal was for participation from the 14 jurisdictions before it was a statewide mandate, so they do not have the baseline data.

Update: Best Practices Memo Progress

Subgroup Lead, Eric Taylor (Enalasy) reported that assistance is needed for incorporation of the following into the Best Practices Memo Draft:

1. *Encourage more participation. A suggested solution is to allow jurisdictions with existing online permitting systems to point to the statewide system.*

Mark Meyers (CALBO) clarified that there are many systems in the state that have online permitting now. He suggested that the solution would be that rather than having them be run through a process “we develop”, they should point to a statewide system, so it could be done more expeditiously. If the application can be well defined for use throughout the state, there are other issues such as architectural review, etcetera to consider. In those cases, if they already have an online system, the State system could clarify and point to those that have online permitting.



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ACTION: Eric Taylor (Enalasy) and Mark Meyers (CALBO) to further discussion suggestion for best practices in online permitting development.

2. *Include lessons learned from “mandatory versus voluntary” discussions into the Best Practices Memo.*

The Chair directed to provide specifics, but to only keep it relative to HVAC online permitting. She also advised that she has more best practices memo content developed for the testimonials’ section and on the Oregon system.

ACTION: The Chair to send the current Best Practices Memo to Eric Taylor (Enalasy) for continued development.

The Chair clarified that direct city testimonials she received from those already using an online permitting system were more focused on receiving basic input on what they liked and what they did not like. Based on her conversations, the Chair learned that both Trak It and Acela were used. The two cities contacted reported liking the incorporation of department wide information, but noted that there were some “kinks” with the slowness of the software connectivity and response. The Chair clarified that similar responses are expected from the larger Jurisdictional Survey the OPWG is conducting. The Chair directed that the focus is trying to get a feel for what specifically about an online permitting system will be beneficial and perhaps what is not liked, and then taking information from the other resources (the Oregon System, Energy Code Ace, the California Solar Guidebook, etcetera), and then drawing some conclusions for how systems operate rather than how they are structured, or perhaps a combination of both, to lead to best practices development.

3. *Review and incorporate applicable Energy Code Ace resources into the Best Practices Memo as a tool.*

Eric Taylor (Enalasy) asked what the group was looking for on how to incorporate Energy Code Ace in terms of what is being done for analyzing statewide feasibility of using online permitting.

- Gary Shushnar (SCE) confirmed they are working with CEC to redesign most of the forms and are talking with building departments to determine what they want to see. He reported that there is already a statewide database through HERS and that there are some software vendors working on a statewide nonresidential database. The focus for them is to make sure that what is permitted is actually installed. They are seeing discrepancies on the HERS databases from what people say is installed versus what is installed. They are trying to make it easier for building inspectors.

Dave Hegarty (Duct Testers) asked if Regulators and HERS raters are involved in the forms redo.

- Gary Shushnar (SCE) ensured they are involved and confirmed that NORESO is running it for them.

ACTION: Eric Taylor (Enalasy) and Gary Shushnar (SCE) to further talk offline about Energy Code Ace and the Best Practices Memo.

Update: Contractor and Jurisdictional Surveys
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The Chair reported that both the contractor and the jurisdictional surveys are active. Multiple reminders are in process with a response deadline of this Friday.

WHPA Staff reported that snapshots of the results received for each survey on 5-4-17 were emailed to the roster prior to the meeting.

In reply to Judy Roberson’s (CEC) inquiry about who would be running the online permitting system and who would be handling it, the Chair clarified that this is still in the discovery stages in WHPA’s hands.

- Compliance Committee Chair, Bob Barks (CALBO), clarified that the goal was not necessarily to create a state system to control permitting, but to point the way of linking the available systems and providing a simpler way for accessing the information to the contractors/owners/jurisdictions, etcetera. He noted that there may need to be creation of a portal through a third party, such as the process done through the HERS registries, where the portal is a free or small charge application to access the online systems already in existence. He stressed the need to be able to coordinate to account for differences in existing systems. The question to answer is on how to narrow it down to a simple list of what must be done, and then how to distribute it to the AHJ. He clarified that the goal was never to create a state controlled permitting system, but rather the application/portal for anyone in the state to start the process in any jurisdiction.



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Jeremy Reeve (SDG&E) reported that he used to work with the WHPA on the Executive Committee. He is now the Codes & Standards lead. He is not sure if the discussion is within the design of the charter of WHPA. He asked about the scope of the project as he does “not want us getting into the weeds of creating a tool by using WHPA as an incubator”.

- Compliance Committee Chair, Bob Barks (CALBO), agreed with Jeremy Reeve’s (SDG&E) comments, but clarified that the OPWG is not developing a system, but rather discussing what would be required. The WHPA will not develop anything to solve the problem, but is asking the questions for what has been done, what the minimum legal requirements are, what contractors and jurisdictions think about it, etcetera. Bob further clarified that it is creating some foundational content that can hopefully point to further research and development efforts in the future. “The most significant thing we can do is open the discussion. We are following up on the work done by the Compliance Committee last year.”
- Eric Taylor (Enalasy) confirmed that the group is giving guidance to the industry at large, but is not developing a specific system.
- Jeremy Reeve (SDG&E) confirmed understanding of the complexities, but restated that he wanted to make sure WHPA is being used as designed. He voiced agreement that this is in scope based on what Bob Barks (CALBO) and Eric Taylor (Enalasy) described above.

ACTION: Per Compliance Committee Chair, Bob Bark’s (CALBO), suggestion, the Best Practices in Online Permitting Memo group to review information about the difficulties with the San Francisco Online Permitting System for research on understanding what problems and issues came up.

MEETING NEXT STEPS OVERVIEW

The next Online Permitting Working Group meetings was confirmed for May 22, 2017 from 9:00am – 10:00am PDT. The agenda is expected to include Eric Taylor’s (Enalasy) Green It Forward Online Permitting System – Statistics Report for best practices research.

CLOSING COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

The Chair adjourned the meeting early at 10:05am PDT.

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SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS AND KEY DECISIONS (from above)

ACTION ITEMS

1. **ACTION:** WHPA Staff to post the final version of the April 24, 2017 meeting notes reflective of any received edits to the [WHPA Online Permitting Webpage](#). (DONE)
2. **ACTION:** Eric Taylor (Enalasy) and Mark Meyers (CALBO) to further discussion suggestion for best practices in online permitting development. (DONE)
3. **ACTION:** The Chair to send the current Best Practices Memo to Eric Taylor (Enalasy) for continued development. (DONE)
4. **ACTION:** Eric Taylor (Enalasy) and Gary Shushnar (SCE) to further talk offline about Energy Code Ace and the Best Practices Memo. (DONE)
5. **ACTION:** Per Compliance Committee Chair, Bob Bark’s (CALBO), suggestion, the Best Practices in Online Permitting Memo group to review information about the difficulties with the San Francisco Online Permitting System for research on understanding what problems and issues came up. (DONE)