

Solar Panel Safety Precautions for Emergency Responders

Emergency responders are facing unexpected challenges as the use of residential PV (solar energy) systems increases. Rooftop solar panels can present significant hazards for emergency responders if a fire occurs.

Basic safety precautions should be taken into account by all firefighters and other emergency personnel when responding to a fire at a home with a PV system:

- Note the time of day. Fires that occur during the daytime present greater danger because the PV system is generating electricity.
- Inform the IC (incident commander) that a PV system is present.
- Note that securing the main electrical does not necessarily shut down solar modules. If a battery system is present, the home may still be energized even if the main electric service is disconnected.
- Carefully cover all solar modules with 100 percent light-blocking materials to stop electrical generation.
- Never break, remove or walk on solar panels. Treat all wiring and components as energized.



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Source: The Fire Protection Research Foundation

**These are basic solar panel safety tips for emergency responders. Emergency personnel should contact the local electric utility for more information.*