

Series 8 - The benefits of earlier adoption of the National Electrical Code.

Issue 1 - Position statement on the benefits of earlier adoption of the NEC.

The National Electrical Code (NFPA 70) is the electrical installation standard used by all 50 states and more than a dozen other countries. The State of California Building Standards Commission amends and adopts the NEC as the California Electrical Code on a triennial basis.

The current California adoption process results in electrical code rules that are more than four years behind current technology. The NEC Code Making Panels completed the revised technical rules for the 2020 NEC in December of 2018. The 2020 NEC will be published in mid-2019. However, the State of California is not scheduled to adopt the 2020 NEC (as the 2019 CEC) until January of 2023. This delay impacts all industries, but is especially difficult for those that are dependent on emerging technologies such as the renewable energy and storage sector.

A more rapid adoption of the NEC would increase the safety, economy and efficiency of the subject industries. For example, the 2020 NEC recognizes and permits the installation of Power Control Systems (705.13). This technology automatically regulates the supply of electricity, from all sources (renewable and utility), preventing oversupply of electrical panel bus and eliminating the very common necessity of installing a new electrical service panelboard to interconnect a renewable energy supply. The result is a safer, faster and far less expensive integration of photovoltaic, energy storage (including battery systems) and other renewable sources. With the current NEC adoption cycle, the citizens and businesses of California will not be able to benefit from this technology until 2023.

The State of California has mandated that 50% of the state's electricity be powered by renewable resources by 2025, moving to 60% by 2030 and 100% by 2045. The single most important factor towards an expedited adoption of renewable energy/storage is through an expedited adoption of the most current NEC. The most recent electrical code is produced by the various industry stakeholders and the rules reflect the latest technology and product standard breakthroughs. Specifically, a more expedited adoption of the NEC would result in improvements towards:

- Safety for system owners
- Renewable energy adoption goals
- Reduced costs for integrators/owners

The Sustainable Energy Action Committee (SEAC) favors a more timely adoption of the NEC.

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