Government of the United States Virgin Islands

VIEO, VIWAPA, DPNR: NEB - ELECTRICIAN CERTIFIED SOLAR INSTALLATIONS

Dear Virgin Islands Renewable Energy Community:

The Virgin Islands Energy Office (VIEO) in partnership with VIWAPA and DPNR have worked diligently in alignment with the Bryan/Roach administration's vision to create a sustainable renewable energy industry within the territory. Thus far, community engagement with the Net Energy Billing program has been promising. Applications continue to be submitted and have navigated through the various stages of the permitting workflow. We continue to strive to ensure that the permit process is streamlined and efficient for all who have and will submit applications. To that end, we have identified that many applications have not been able to navigate the permitting process to completion despite multiple months of processing. Additionally, it is clear that a significant amount of installations by installers/electricians who are not certified within the VIEO program have continued to persist throughout the territory. In recognizing these challenges the VIWAPA, VIEO, and DPNR team has collaborated to creatively address the issue.

Beginning in immediately, Net Energy Billing applications will require a Certifying Letter and Installation Checklist from the Licensed Electrician associated with the project. Relative to the permitting workflow, the submission of the Certifying Letter and Installation Checklist will replace the following steps: **DPNR Electrical Plan Review, the DPNR Electrical Inspection, and DPNR Final Electrical Inspection**. The goal of accepting the Certifying Letter and Installation Checklist is to expedite the DPNR approval process and ensure that applications will efficiently navigate the permit process to completion. The Certifying Letter and Installation Checklist must be signed and stamped by the Licensed Electrician associated with the project and uploaded to the project within the Net Energy Billing Portal or submitted within the Virgin Islands Energy Office. The template for the Certifying Letter and Checklist will be provided by the VIEO and made available for in office and/or download on the VIEO website energy.vi.gov.

The use of the Certifying Letter and Installation Checklist will function similarly to the "Electrical Certifications for Power Connections" that was implemented following the 2017 storms to ensure timely reconnection of weather heads throughout the community. The waiver of the **DPNR Electrical Plan Review, the DPNR Electrical Inspection, and DPNR Final Electrical Inspection** is a special consideration that has been granted to the Virgin Islands community. As a result, participation is **REQUIRED** from all non-registered grid interconnected Solar and Solar plus Storage installations throughout the territory. Strict enforcement protocols will be implemented for intentional non-compliance.

This joint communication serves to remind unregistered distributed energy stakeholders that the Net Energy Billing program is **NOT** a voluntary program. We expect all currently installed, non-Net Meter, and future grid-connected distributed energy installations to be registered within the program. The VIEO is in the process of scheduling in office walk-throughs of the online permitting portal, and we invite installers, electricians, and property owners to call 340-713-8436 to schedule an appointment on St. Croix and St. Thomas.

Sincerely

Kyle Fleming, Director