

AriSEIA Press Release  
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## **Bisbee First City in Arizona to Eliminate Solar Permit Fees**

**Bisbee AZ** – On September 18<sup>th</sup> the Bisbee City Council took an important step toward the expansion of solar energy development in their community. By a unanimous vote the Council made Bisbee the first city in Arizona to do away with solar permit fees.

The new city Ordinance will completely eliminate permit, plan review, and inspection fees associated with the installation of both Solar Hot Water and Solar Electric Devices. The ordinance is an extension of the Mayor of Bisbee's Climate Protection Agreement, a pledge by the city to reduce its carbon footprint. *Bee Cool Bisbee*, a local advocacy group, worked closely with the city of Bisbee to gain approval for the agreement.

While roadblocks to solar such as HOAs and Utility interconnection have received attention from media and legislators seeking to eliminate barriers to solar adoption, permit fees have been largely overlooked. Nevertheless "permit fees can dramatically increase the price of a solar system" says Mike Neary, President of the Arizona Solar Energy Industries Association. "In cities such as Phoenix where permit fees are under \$200 they are not much of an obstacle. However, in Chandler and Glendale permits can be well over \$1,000. On a smaller solar electric system this could represent 10 or 15 percent of the final system cost, and dramatically increase the time it takes a system to pay for itself" added Mr. Neary.

Ultimately it is hoped that the City of Bisbee is creating a precedent that other municipalities will follow.

Britt Hanson, Chief Civil Deputy for the Cochise County Attorney's office and one of the principal proponents of the new ordinance, praised the efforts of the Council and the Bisbee advocacy community. "Eliminating building permit fees for active solar devices in order to encourage renewable energy is a natural extension of the Mayor's commitment to reduce carbon emissions. We're pleased that Bisbee is leading the way, and hope that other cities follow suit."

*AriSEIA is a chapter of the national Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) and represents solar industry members and solar advocates. The group's focus is on education, professionalism and promotion of public policies that support deployment of solar technologies in Arizona.*