

QUICK GUIDE  
FDNY CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL  
ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEMS  
PRODUCTS

Sustainable CUNY  
City University of New York

February 2023



## Sustainable CUNY

As a trusted public entity, Sustainable CUNY of the City University of New York established a partnership with the Mayor's Office of NYC in 2006 to address the barriers to solar grid integration. This collaborative effort was expanded to include energy storage systems (ESS) in 2013 and has been formalized as the [Smart Distributed Generation \(DG\) Hub](#). The Smart DG Hub's dedicated and knowledgeable Ombudsmen provide support to the solar and storage industries as well as NYC agency staff who are tasked with creating new solar and energy storage regulatory structures. As part of this effort, the Smart DG Hub has led development of a resource library for solar and energy storage system (ESS) project developers, installers, and other industry stakeholders, aimed at providing guidance on various elements of the NYC permitting and approval processes.

This document is intended as a "quick start" guide for initiating a Certificate of Approval (COA) application for ESS products with the Fire Department of New York (FDNY). For additional information regarding energy storage permitting in NYC visit the Smart DG Hub's [resources library](#).

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## COA Background

The FDNY's COA is a key step to entering the NYC market and an initial "gateway" to NYC approvals for energy storage products. COA applications are typically initiated by the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or system integrators.

The COA review process involves careful evaluation of a product's design and safety characteristics. A COA in the form of a letter is then issued to the applicant at the end of the review process, containing prescriptive installation requirements tailored to that product. These tailored requirements, which are largely determined via evaluation of the product's UL 9540A test data results, are meant to complement other code- and rule-based installation requirements.

**COA review involves careful evaluation of a product's design and safety characteristics largely determined via evaluation of the product's UL 9540A test data**

### Key Terminology:

- The term "COA" is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "Equipment Approval", for example in the city's Rule 3RCNY 608-01 governing outdoor ESS installations.
- There are two types of COAs: a "product" COA (also called "City-wide") and a "Site-specific" COA. For most purposes, ESS products would seek the City-wide COA. This pertains to the product itself and is applicable to subsequent installations, whereas the Site-specific COA is as the name implies – applicable only to a single specific site.
- Also note that the acronym "TM2" is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "COA" - but TM2 simply refers to the application form that is used for the COA application.

FDNY recently released a list of ESS that have received COAs which is publicly accessible via the FDNY Business website, [List of Approved Energy Storage Systems](#). As new ESS products receive COAs they will be added to this list, so developers/installers looking to do ESS projects in the city will refer to this list for products.

For information on products that are in the COA review queue, please [contact the Smart DG Hub](#).

## COA Application Information

The [COA Application Portal - About](#) page provides useful background information that users should read at least once before beginning an application. The "About" page indicates that the COA is used for various other products, not exclusively ESS. As such, users will find a list of Required Documents ("Testing Reports", "User Manuals", and "Authorization Letter"). However, that list is generic to all types of products – whereas **for an ESS COA application, additional documents are also required.** Below is a broader list of submittal requirements:

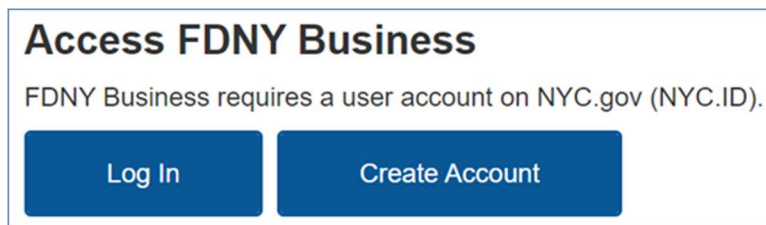
1. Testing reports (UL 9540A)
2. Listing information (UL 9540, 1973, 1741 for inverters)
3. User manual(s)
4. Other OEM product literature, e.g. specifications and ratings, etc.
5. HMA (Hazard Mitigation Analysis) – prepared by a New York State licensed professional
6. Emergency Management Plan

Note that as the COA review progresses, there can be instances in which additional information beyond the six items listed above may be requested, for example, if a product has some unique characteristic or novel technology, component, etc. Applicants may set up a pre-submission virtual meeting with the Technology Management Unit by contacting [tech.mgt@fdny.nyc.gov](mailto:tech.mgt@fdny.nyc.gov).

## Application Portal Navigation

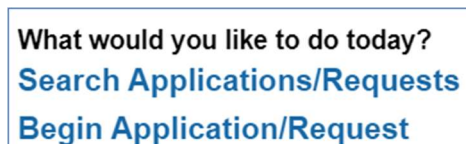
To access the COA application portal for the first time and create an account:

- From the FDNY Business “[All Certifications](#)” page, follow “Get Certificates of Approval” > “FDNY Business” link (note: hyperlinks on this page are in red).
- On the FDNY Business information page, click the “[Create Account](#)” button:



To begin an application after your account has been created:

- For **direct** access to the application portal, follow the above steps but click the “Log In” button (it is recommended to bookmark this Log In link: <https://fires.fdnyccloud.org/CitizenAccess/SAML/NYCIDLogin.aspx>).
  - An alternate way to access the application portal is via the “[Certificate of Approval – About](#)” page - it is highly recommended to visit the About page at least once to read the full description and background information pertaining to the COA.
- To begin a COA application from the Log In page click “Begin Application/Request”.



- Under “Select Type of Application, click “Design and Installation Application” and then select “Technology Management Application” from the drop-down.

- This will bring you to the *Technology Management Application* first page. Under the “Application Information” section, for the “Application Type” box, select “Certificate of Approval”.

- Upon selecting “Certificate of Approval” from this list, please follow any subsequent prompts regarding required information (denoted with a \*) and any other items specifically denoted as pertaining to a COA application.
- You may save your application via the “Save” button at the bottom of each screen and come back to it at a later date.
- Applications with no activity after six months will be deemed abandoned.

## ABOUT

The City University of New York formed the Smart Distributed Generation Hub (Smart DG Hub) to develop a strategic pathway to a more resilient distributed energy system. The Smart DG Hub, working in collaboration with NYS municipalities and partners across the state, has developed an extensive portfolio of educational resources about solar+storage, including guidance for permitting these systems.

[smartdghub.org](http://smartdghub.org)



**SMART DG HUB**

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