

# NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY  
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December 3, 2013

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## **Citizens praise Supervisors and County Land Use staff for work on solar energy ordinance**

SAN BERNARDINO – Citizens thanked the Board of Supervisors and the Land Use Services Department today for working with the community on developing a solar energy ordinance which balances the preservation of the environment and desert landscape with the demands of a burgeoning new energy industry.

During today's Board meeting, the Supervisors voted to approve the new ordinance, effectively lifting a temporary moratorium imposed in June.

Land Use Services held community meetings to address concerns about new solar energy projects, mostly from citizens throughout the High Desert. After hearing those concerns, new guidelines that will protect natural resources and maintain compatibility with current neighborhood and future development needs were written into the ordinance.

For instance, developers of solar projects will be required to obtain a special use permit which allows for Code Enforcement to monitor the sites to make sure projects are in compliance. The projects must be compatible with current and future land use and have minimal impact on the environment, ecosystem and scenic views.

The Board is expected to adopt the ordinance on December 17 and it would go into effect 30 days later.

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Planning Director Terri Rahhal told the Board the department is still working on creating a renewable energy plan that will establish new guidelines into the County's development code by 2015. The solar energy ordinance is expected to incorporate those changes as the development code for renewable energy projects is updated.

"It is a first step," Rahhal said of the ordinance. "It doesn't answer every question or concern out there."