



Accessory Dwelling Units and Electrical Service

If you're planning to build an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), reach out to us at SMUD, your community-owned not-for-profit electric service, for a free consultation. Whether you're converting a garage or building a multi-level unit, each ADU has location and design parameters that pose a unique set of challenges. Working with SMUD early in the process can help you understand service options and determine if adjacent properties are affected. We can also help you avoid redesign costs and project delays.

To help plan your ADU project, here are some helpful tips.

1. **Do your homework first.** Your application and review process through your local jurisdiction

doesn't include connecting the new unit to SMUD electric service. Find out what the electric service requirements are and what your design needs to include.

- Are there any existing overhead power lines that may conflict with the new unit? See if there are any lines directly over or adjacent to the footprint (foundation area) of the building.
- What do you want to build? What is the footprint of the proposed structure? Will the unit be attached to your existing home, or detached? How many stories will it have? Factors like these determine how we'll provide electric service to your ADU.

Powering forward.
Together.





- What type of side or rear yard setback are you proposing for the new unit, per your jurisdiction's zoning code? If there are setbacks along the back or side yards that are less than 5 feet, running new service lines to the unit may be challenging.
- Where will the new electric panel be located? A duplex meter installation is usually required for most ADU situations. This meter panel may need to be placed on the existing or new structure depending on your situation.

2. **Confirm the design prior to submitting your plan to your local jurisdiction.** There are design elements that may require coordination between your local jurisdiction and SMUD to identify the location of additional equipment and to determine how to deliver electrical service from a utility pole to your unit.

- Are there public or private trees in front of or on your site? The location of the tree(s) could affect where poles and service lines can be established.
- Will easements be required from adjacent property owners? In some cases, easements from neighboring properties may be required. This could add substantial time to your construction schedule.

State law now requires electrical solar solutions to be installed on any new residential building, including ADUs. If you plan to install rooftop solar panels, additional metering equipment may be required. We offer a system estimator tool to help you evaluate your rooftop solar options, and we anticipate that by September 2020, we'll be offering

the SMUD Neighborhood Solar Shares program to our customers. This program provides all the benefits of solar, including environmental benefits and bill savings, without the need to install a solar system on your roof. For more information, please go to smud.org/NeighborhoodSolarShares. To use the system estimator tool, please sign into [My Account](#).

3. **Ask about additional benefits.** Don't forget to ask about incentives or rebates for energy efficiency upgrades. You may be able to get money back on energy-efficient appliances, insulation, windows, toilets and landscaping. If you're including a home (primary dwelling unit) renovation, you may get rebates for both structures. For more information about rebates for your home, please go to smud.org/Rebates.
4. **Plan at least six months in advance.** Take the time to do the necessary research and planning to lessen your risks. The typical SMUD timeline from application to building occupancy is four to six months (SMUD application approval timelines are separate from your local jurisdiction's planning and building permit approval timelines but can be processed at the same time). However, the necessary work for ADUs often exceed this timeline due to unforeseen challenges.

For more information on the SMUD new construction process, or to make an appointment to discuss your ADU project, please go to smud.org/Construction.

