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Use at Will – September 2006

Tips for Purchasing and Using Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs

ENERGY STAR® qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are an easy way for Wisconsin residents to help change Wisconsin, one light, one step at a time. Using CFLs can reduce utility bills, save energy and help protect the environment. Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, offers the following tips for purchasing and properly using CFLs.

1. **Replace the five most used light bulbs with ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs.**
   Wisconsin residents can save more than $60 a year simply by replacing the incandescent bulbs in the five light fixtures they use most with ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs. The most frequently used fixtures in the average home are: kitchen ceiling dome light, living room table lamp, living room floor lamp, bathroom vanity light and outdoor porch or post lamp.

2. **Make sure to select the best shape and size CFL.**
   CFLs come in a multitude of shapes and sizes and are compatible with a variety of fixtures. Today's ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs are designed to be smaller and thinner than earlier models, so they can be installed in a wider variety of fixtures, including three-way fixtures and torchieres.

3. **Use ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs in fixtures that are hard to reach.**
   ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs offer superior performance by lasting up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs, making frequent changes of hard-to-reach bulbs a thing of the past.

4. **CFLs are available in a range of color temperatures.**
   Soft light or very bright light, CFLs can create the desired look.

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For a warm, white light, look for a color temperature of 2,700 to 3,000 Kelvin. For a cooler, white light, look for a color temperature of 4,500 to 6,000 Kelvin. The retailer can help select the best CFL to achieve a desired look.

5. Compare lumens, not watts.

ENERGY STAR qualified CFLs provide the same amount of light as incandescent bulbs, but have a lower wattage rating. This means they use less energy. When comparing CFLs to incandescents, compare the light output, or lumens, and not watts. Residents can find the lumens on product packaging.

Use the table below to find the lumen or light output range for the most popular residential incandescent bulbs.

Incandescent Bulb (Watts)	Typical Lumens (Measure of Light Output)
40	> 450
60	> 800
75	> 1,100
100	> 1,600
150	> 2,600

6. Proper disposal of CFLs and other fluorescent lamps is important.

While there is a small amount of mercury encased in the base of CFLs, using the bulbs poses no harm to consumers. In fact, the biggest source of mercury in our air comes from burning coal to produce electricity, and because incandescent bulbs require more electricity than CFLs, they are actually responsible for more mercury emissions.

Burned out CFLs are recyclable, just like other fluorescent bulbs. Check with a local recycling company to see if they recycle them. If not, place the burned-out CFL in a sealed plastic bag and dispose of it with the regular trash.

For more information about ENERGY STAR qualified products, including the names of area retailers, call Focus on Energy at 800.762.7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

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