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Outdoor lighting upgrades can yield huge cost savings: LEDs can have a major impact - by Jessica Vail

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Does your facility have a parking lot, garage or large quantity of outdoor lighting? There are many reasons to upgrade your lights and fixtures as they will help your facility operate more efficiently.

Something as simple as swapping out your old lights to LED can have a major impact on your property and bottom line with huge cost savings. On average, switching to LED lights can translate to 40-60% energy reduction per fixture and they are approximately 90% more effective than regular incandescent or fluorescent bulbs. In addition, LED's are much brighter than a standard light which can create a safer place to walk at night.

Let's Run the Numbers

The upfront cost of LED light fixtures is, on average, much higher than regular, incandescent light fixtures. But over time, the lights will actually "pay for themselves" due to the cost savings on utility bills.

When one is challenged with the option of buying a \$1 regular, incandescent bulb or buying a new \$50 LED lighting fixture, most would opt for replacing the bulb at the lowest cost possible. However, the savings become obvious when the further comparison between the bulb and LED fixture is examined. On average, the utility cost for a standard incandescent light is \$40 per year. For a comparable LED, the annual cost is around \$4. This means that the LED light will pay for itself in less than two years when you calculate the cost using the \$50 average price for each new fixture.

The savings over time is noticeable since the lifespan of an LED bulb is roughly 50,000 hours. Incandescent lights, by comparison, only live for about 1,200 hours. The shorter lifespan adds to the cost of incandescent bulbs in the long term, since they will need to be replaced more frequently. Especially for outdoor lighting, the longer life of LEDs means that you will rarely if ever, have to climb a ladder or prune landscaping to change a bulb.

LED lighting also emits light directionally, usually at 180 degrees, which means no energy will be wasted illuminating in directions that are not useful. This can also create a more dramatic, artistic effect for your landscaping.

LED Lights are More Durable

Outdoor lighting is subject to significantly more wear and tear than indoor lighting. LED lights are rugged and equipped to withstand outdoor hazards, whereas halogen lights are fragile and prone to break easily, leaving you financially responsible for replacing them. Because LEDs are more durable than regular lighting, it reduces maintenance costs.

Insects are not attracted to LED Lights

Still not sold on LED lights? It is valuable to know that insects are only attracted to UV lights - which is why you see them at night circling regular lighting fixtures. LED lights do not emit UV rays, so

insects will not be attracted to your lights. In addition, LED fixtures give off very low levels of heat when giving off their light source, bugs are also attracted to the heat from incandescent lights; having less heat emitted from an LED will also alleviate the issue unwanted bugs.

The Big Picture

When looking at the big picture, LED lights are the ideal choice for outdoor lighting and the benefits of LEDs surpass alternative lighting solutions. LED lights are brighter, have a longer life, produce energy savings, create a safer environment at night, a bug deterrent and they are durable. Having them be more durable and flexible than incandescent lights means they can be mounted, or motion censored or on fixtures, allowing your property to have both creativity in your lighting, as well as all the other benefits.

If you are still unsure whether or not LED lights are the right upgrade for your property, it is always best to contact your energy consultant for more information or feasibility study.

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