

GO “GREEN” WITHOUT TURNING BLUE

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Lighting options to
minimize your
environmental impact.

HOW CAN YOU GO “GREEN” WITHOUT TURNING BLUE? Everyday, we are bombarded with ever growing messages about how to save the planet, but where do we begin? One of the easiest, top-of-mind ideas is to switch out the incandescent light bulbs in our homes with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). However, there are special features of fluorescents that are important to consider before making the switch. There are also environmentally friendly non-fluorescent options to consider.

The quality of CFLs has vastly improved these last few years. No longer the glaring, blue-colored light of years past, these bulbs are now available with a light output that is very close to natural sunlight. Critics of the movement to replace regular bulbs with fluorescents cite concerns about the bulb's disposal due to the mercury inherent in its construction. While the amount of mercury in a fluorescent bulb is minimal, the issue still needs to be addressed. When the bulbs require replacement, disposal should be in a sealed container or double plastic bag. Care should be given to avoid breakage. The CFLs may also be transported to an approved collection center and recycled.

Other options exist for a homeowner wanting to make a Green lighting choice. A great example is National Geographic's new Solar Hybrid L.E.D. Outdoor Light. The patent pending design combines the technology of solar power with L.E.D.s and CFLs to make a supered-up energy efficient light. The solar panel on the top powers four long-lasting (up to 50,000 hours) L.E.D. lights. A light sensor automatically switches the L.E.D.s on at dusk for continuous operation until dawn. This is an ideal no-fuss outdoor lighting solution. In addition, a compact fluorescent bulb can be turned on if more light is needed.

A quality dimmer switch added to a lighting circuit will reduce energy use. As the light is dimmed the energy consumption is also lowered. In addition, a dimmer set at 50% of its range can increase the life of the lightbulb by up to 20 times!

The use of an occupancy sensor switch will also reduce energy. These smart switches turn off the lights in a room after a predetermined period of time when the room has been unoccupied. This type of switch allows for an energy efficient use of incandescent-powered fixtures and is ideal for bathrooms, bedrooms and laundry rooms.

As the Green movement has progressed so has the lighting industry to meet the objectives of homeowners who want to reduce their carbon footprint. You can find plenty of energy-efficient options that offer style and self-expression in addition to minimized environmental impact.

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