Lights Out: Ready for Lighting Legislation?

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The next phase of the Department of Energy's (DOE) energy-efficiency lighting legislation went into effect on July 14, 2012 and requires all impacted lighting to be manufactured to be more energy-efficient. Most recently, the DOE has granted a deadline extension for some lighting categories until July 14, 2014, leaving some businesses uncertain on how to best move forward in adopting energy efficient lighting. Grainger, North America's leading broad line distributor of facilities maintenance products, provides a "Test-Your-Readiness" questionnaire to help businesses better understand how well they are prepared to adapt to the legislation.

"Grainger has been following the legislation closely in partnership with our lighting suppliers to ensure we're helping our customers prepare for the changes," said, Meeta Kratz, senior director, Customer Business Issues, Grainger. "Even with the recent deadline extensions, the second phase of the legislation is still a very important milestone for efficient lighting and presents a huge opportunity for businesses to improve their energy management practices."

Grainger provides a "Test Your Readiness" questionnaire, which features seven simple questions that aim to help businesses understand where they may stand on meeting the requirements of the lighting legislation:

1. Did you know that the DOE granted a deadline extension on T8 products of some manufacturers? While T12 and halogen parabolic aluminized

reflector **(**PAR) lamps will be impacted by the July 14, 2012 deadline, the DOE has granted extension requests of some manufacturers on the manufacturing of T8 products, with a new stop-manufacture date of July 14, 2014.

2. Did you know that there is a cost to waiting to make the switch to efficient lighting? Many lighting categories were impacted by the legislation effective July 14, 2012 and by 2014, most standard medium screw-base incandescent light bulbs will no longer be manufactured and most general service lamps will need to meet minimum energy-efficiency standards. The value of moving forward with retrofits [1]and lighting programs in the near term is that businesses and organizations can take full and immediate advantage of the financial opportunities associated with more energy-efficient lighting ranging from actual energy savings to participating in government incentive programs.
3. Do you know what lumen equivalent to look for when replacing inefficient lamps? Lumens are now the key to finding replacement lamps using the new energy-efficient standards. Lumens measure lamp brightness, while watts refer to how much energy it uses. For example, a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) producing 800 – 850 lumens is generally the equivalent of a 60-watt incandescent lamp.
4. Do you know the lifespan of light-emitting diode (LED) vs. CFL vs. halogen and incandescent bulbs? Depending on usage, LEDs can last up to 25 years and some CFLs can last over 10 years, while many halogen and incandescent bulbs last generally about one year.
5. Did you know that switching out old incandescent exit signs can be a quick and easy way to start saving on energy costs for your facility? LED signs have an average life of 11 years, which not only saves energy costs, but also the costs to maintain the sign. This is just one of many ways businesses can start making changes on a small scale.
6. Did you know that facilities can significantly save on long-term costs when inefficient lighting is replaced with energy-efficient alternatives? Even though initial replacement costs may be high if a facility needs to do a full retrofit, facilities can realize a substantial savings on long-term energy costs and reduce the labor required to change out lamps.
7. Have you explored your lighting retrofit options? Some lighting found in commercial buildings will require full retrofits to accommodate the new ballasts and energy-efficient lamps. It is important to understand what lighting within a facility will require a retrofit, so advanced planning and budgeting can be put in place to ease into the transition.

Answering “no” to any of these questions presents an opportunity for a facility to better understand the upcoming legislation and determine what energy-efficient lighting plan would be the best fit for their organization.

“To ensure that businesses take advantage of the significant time and money savings that can come with energy-efficient lighting, it is important to understand the implications of the upcoming legislation and what lighting options are available to fit the unique needs of any size business,” said Kratz. “Whether you’re looking to start slow with simple lighting upgrades or if you’re ready to do a full facility retrofit,

Grainger is committed to helping keep its customers aware of the ongoing changes in lighting, and what that means to operations and the bottom line."

To find more information on the lighting legislation, visit www.grainger.com/legislation [2]. Also view Grainger's "lighting language" dictionary for a list of commonly used lighting terms.

What's your take? Please feel free to comment below! For more information, please visit grainger.com [3].

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