

Environment

Reminder: A New Light Bulb Ban Kicks in on January 1

Dec. 17, 2013 9:06am [Liz Klimas](#)

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Video

For those who are fans of the traditional, yellowish glow of an incandescent light bulb, the time has come stock up.

We've already seen the 75-watt variety ushered out with a ban on manufacturing or importing them starting in 2013, but Jan. 1, 2014, starts the same process with 40- and 60-watt bulbs.

This is not to say the bulbs won't be available into 2014 and perhaps beyond. Under the Energy Independence and Security Act, signed by President George W. Bush and [upheld by Congress in 2011](#), stores are allowed to continue to sell the incandescent bulbs until the supply runs out.



In this Jan. 21, 2011 file photo, manager Nick Reynoza holds a 100-watt incandescent light bulb at Royal Lighting in Los Angeles. In an attempt to cut energy consumption, federal laws began prohibiting the production of some incandescent bulbs. Starting 2014, 40- and 60-watt light bulbs will be banned (AP/Jae C. Hong, File)

The move forces consumers to switch to LED, compact fluorescent light bulbs and others, which are currently

more expensive than the Thomas Edison-invented incandescents but are billed to be more efficient with a longer lifespan.

Many were upset at a federal regulation limiting consumer choice for a product that some feel doesn't match up in terms of performance quality. Parodies have been made to [lament the phasing out](#) of the incandescent bulb:

"Once all of our nation's 4 billion screw-based sockets have an efficient bulb in them, U.S. consumers will save \$13 billion and 30 large coal-burning power plants-worth of electricity a year. The savings really add up," Noah Horowitz, senior scientist for the Natural Resources Defense Council [told Yahoo](#) recently.

Even though Americans have had years to warm up to the idea and [technology is advancing to improve the performance](#) of these alternative light bulbs, there are still those who aren't on board.

"The soul doesn't connect to LED, it's a visceral reaction," lighting designer Bentley Meeker told Yahoo. "Until the mid-1850s, the only light that humans were exposed to was daylight and firelight — incandescent bulbs have a color that is similar to firelight."

He said he believes the more efficient light bulbs are too harsh for what the human eye is accustomed to.

As the familiar glow of incandescents disappears over time, there are a couple things one can do to achieve a comfortable result with alternative bulbs.

Here [are a couple of the tips](#) Yahoo suggested:

Don't inadvertently buy a bulb that's too bright. New bulbs are measured in lumens, not watts, which can be confusing. A 10-watt LED is as bright as a 60-watt incandescent, so if you purchase a 19-watt LED for a small accent light, it will seem glaring. The [NRDC has a useful chart](#) showing the light equivalences of various bulbs.

Choose different types of bulbs for different purposes. Meeker uses LEDs and CFLs to light hallways, stairwells, and basements, and for spotlighting objects. For living spaces, he prefers halogen incandescent bulbs. He says they are a great substitute for the old bulbs, especially if you use them on a dimmer.

If you want to use CFLs, choose the right color. Most people prefer the ones labeled "warm." The bulbs that are labeled "daylight" are bluish.

One of the new-age light bulbs that will become available after the first of the year is the Phillips SlimStyle LED, which is a flattened, horseshoe-shaped bulb.



Phillips SlimStyle LED bulb. (Image source: CNET/YouTube)

CNET [reviewed the bulb and compared it to competitors](#), saying its uptake will “all come down to the SlimStyle’s price point.”

“If the absence of heat sinks is enough to keep the cost per bulb somewhere around \$10 or less, then the SlimStyle LED stands to make a lot of sense — particularly to consumers who are making first-time upgrades from newly obsolete incandescents, and who aren’t looking to spend very much in the process,” CNET editor’s wrote.



Image source: CNET/YouTube

Watch CNET's review:

The [law will fully go into effect by 2020](#), requiring light bulbs to be 60 to 70 percent more efficient than what the standard incandescent is today.

Featured image via Shutterstock.

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