

## T12 Fluorescent Lamps to be Phased Out in 2012

### Key Points

- New federal lighting standards will eliminate most commercially available T12 lights after July 2012.
- For facilities using T12 lamps, maintaining outdated lighting systems will become more difficult.
- Energy savings and incentives can offset the costs of upgrading to more efficient lighting products.



Source: <http://www.epa.gov/>

If your facility is still using T12 fluorescent lamps, you may want to consider a lighting upgrade. Why? New federal lighting performance standards that take effect on July 14, 2012 will virtually eliminate most commercially available T12 lamps from the market.

The new lighting standards are the result of energy conservation requirements contained in the *Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007*. The standards apply to all 4-foot, 8-foot, and U-shaped fluorescent lamps and require minimum efficacies in lumens per watt (see this U.S. Department of Energy [fact sheet](#) for details). Most currently available T12 lighting products cannot meet these new standards and will no longer be manufactured or sold in the United States after the July 2012 deadline.

The impact of the new standards will be felt by facilities across the country. The National Lighting Bureau estimates that as many as 500 million T12 fixtures are still in place. (NLB 2011) Although there is no requirement for facilities to immediately upgrade from T12 lights, maintaining outdated lighting systems will become more difficult and expensive after replacement components are no longer available.

T12 lamps are an older and inefficient technology and more efficient alternatives, such as T8 and T5 lamps, are widely available. These lighting alternatives not only save energy, they last longer and provide better light quality. Simply replacing a standard T12 lamp and ballast with a T8 lamp and electronic ballast can result in energy savings of up to 40%, according to the Consortium for Energy Efficiency.

Although upgrading a lighting system can be expensive, state and local rebates and incentives can help to offset upfront costs and shorten the return on your investment. Search the [Database of State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency \(DSIRE\)](#) for programs available in your area. In addition, your lighting upgrade may qualify for the [Commercial Building Tax Deduction](#), which allows building owners to claim up to 60 cents per square foot of building space in tax incentives for installation costs.

### References

National Lighting Bureau (NLB). *"Too Few Commercial-Lighting Decision-Makers Use the Cash for 'Clunker-Lighting' Program and We All Pay," Says National Lighting Bureau.* 2011.

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