



City of Wayne Newsletter

City of Wayne
Utilities

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ENERGYWISE TIP ~ Incandescent Christmas Light's Last Gleaming



If you're still using incandescent Christmas lights for your holiday decorating, I assume you have your reasons. I have mine. For me, it's the nostalgia of Christmases past. So, when I considered switching to LED lights, I did some homework. For those still on the fence, I share some arguments and insight below.

First, I've heard the "stranded" investment rational. "I've got too much invested in all my lights!" "If they're not broke, why would you pitch 'em?" These sound like two contentions I'm sure my grandpa would make if I could ask his opinion on upgrading to LEDs. Unfortunately, these perspectives don't account for operating and maintaining those lights into the future.

Truth be told, both incandescent and LED lights will eventually need replacement. Though some may boast their Christmas lights are decades old, most light strands fail long before reaching such an age. While traditional lights have ratings 3,000 hours of use or less, some LED Christmas lights boast a 50,000-hour lifetime. Though light sets used indoors will last much longer than outdoor sets, don't expect anywhere close to 50,000 hours. According to Christmasdesigners.com, a company with more than 30 years of experience building and installing Christmas decorations and lighting, exterior LED and traditional incandescent light sets have about the same lifespan. Professional and commercial grade sets will last six to seven years if stored away after Christmas. If left up throughout the year, they will only last 24 to 30 months. Average retail grade sets, which most homeowners buy, will last about three years when taken out of storage and displayed only during the holiday season. If left up year-round, retail grade sets are fortunate to last six to 12 months.

Second, I've heard cost per strand makes LEDs unaffordable. Let's do some simple math. Assume my Christmas lights operate 12 hours-per-day for 30 days of the season. That's a total of 360 hours-a-year. Currently, a 100-bulb strand of traditional incandescent mini-lights costs about \$3 and requires 40 watts of electricity, while a 100-bulb strand of LED mini-lights costs from \$6 to \$12 and only requires six watts. If electricity costs \$0.12 per kilowatt-hour, the traditional incandescent mini-light sets each cost about \$1.73 to oper-

ate, while LED mini-light sets only cost \$0.26. Energy savings pay for the new LED mini-lights in four to eight years. Not bad.

When I look at the large C9 lights for exterior lighting, a strand of 25 traditional incandescent lights will cost about \$12 to purchase and \$9.72 per season to operate. A new set of 25 LED C9 lights will only cost \$5 to \$10 per 25 lamps. More importantly, electricity to operate them will only cost \$0.09 per season! In other words, energy savings gained by upgrading to LED C9 lights will pay for each new LED replacement strand in about one season or less.

Others have complained LED Christmas lights are not as bright as incandescents. While this may be true when comparing individual bulbs, LEDs produce 10 times or more light than incandescent bulbs given the same amount of electricity. Moreover, multi-color LEDs tend to be more vibrant than incandescent Christmas lights, and they are available in many colors other than the traditional red, orange, yellow, green and blue. Even when selecting white lights, LEDs provide a choice of warm or cool white tones.

The most unusual rationalization I've heard for not upgrading to LED Christmas lights is safety. The person arguing this opinion pointed out some LEDs contain lead and other heavy metals which are toxic to humans. After listening to them, I pointed out most Christmas light manufacturers use lead in PVC insulation that insulates Christmas light wiring regardless of the lighting technology, albeit in trace amounts. That being said, LEDs and traditional incandescent Christmas lights are currently not considered toxic by law and can be disposed of in regular landfills.

If anything, LEDs provide greater safety than incandescent Christmas lights. Because of the heat they generate, incandescent bulbs must be made from glass, which can break and easily cut someone mishandling them. LEDs use plastic, which reduces accidental cutting hazards. As incandescent bulbs become hot, they can also become a fire hazard if operated too close to flammable substances. To the contrary, LEDs remain cool enough to touch even after hours of operation. The high operating temperature of incandescent lights is a direct result of the inefficient

conversion of electricity to light. Consequently, incandescent Christmas lights can easily overload electrical circuits and must carry warnings and advise no more than five strands per circuit. By comparison, some LED sets state you can connect up to 50 strings without concern.

That brings me to my final justification for using incandescent Christmas lights: nostalgia. They bring back memories of being three years-old, then four the following year. I traveled with my parents for what seemed like hours as we made our way to grandpa and grandma's farm for the holidays. As we drove into the evening and came to the last mile, our car would crest the final hill. At that point, I would be overwhelmed at the glowing incandescent splendor of grandpa's luminary creations. Though still so far away, their brilliance cut through the night and made promise of the food, family and fun to be shared over the next few days. Their warm radiance assured security and love.

But today, as I approach grandpa's age of when those magic memories occurred, I'm realizing it's not that I want to go back in time to grandpa and grandma's. Instead, I'm hoping my children, and someday, grandchildren, will have many of the same feelings I had when they come back for the holidays. As they gaze on our beautifully-illuminated home, it won't be the lighting technology that creates those sentimental memories they will cherish for years to come. Rather, it will be the special time we share together at this most-special time of year.

Looks like I need to go to a hardware store and get some LED Christmas lights. Merry Christmas.

Your local public utility, wishes you and those closest to you the best of holiday seasons. For additional ideas on how you can make your home comfortable and EnergyWiseSM this winter, contact your local electric utility or visit www.nppd.com. You may even find you are eligible for incentives to help with the cost of energy-saving home improvements.

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CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

December 4th
December 18th

NEW CITY HALL OFFICE HOURS

City Hall office
Hours are:
7:30 a.m.
until 4:30 p.m.



REMINDER

City Offices will be closed Monday afternoon on December 24th and all day December 25th for the Christmas Holiday.

Department News ~

Wayne Public Library ~

Come in for a fun filled evening when Santa comes to visit! On December 4th between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., he will be here for children to sit on his lap and share their Christmas wishes! Meanwhile across the hall, we will have coloring, crafts, stories and treats to enjoy. Hope to see you all for a festive and jolly evening to kick off your Holiday events!

Board Game Night is Thursday, December 6th beginning at 6:30 p.m. Come and join in to play games and enjoy snacks as a community together! Great selection for all ages!

The Needle Night group is so informal, kind of like open mic night! We just set aside every Thursday from 6-8 p.m. for needlework with anyone who shows up, so you never know who/how many might show up or not. We are not limited to knitting, but welcome anyone who crochets, weaves, etc. The public library is our home except when we join the more organized college group on the last Thursday of the month at the campus library while WSC classes are in session.

Enjoy a relaxing evening! **Adult Coloring Night** on Tuesday, December 11th, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the library. All supplies are provided, plus a light snack will be available at this FREE event sponsored by Pac-N-Save. Coloring Nights are open to men and women ages 18 and older. Coloring benefits people by lowering stress & anxiety levels, helping a person focus on the present to achieve mindfulness, and giving the brain relief by entering a meditative state.

Join us for an **Adult Craft Night** on Tuesday, December 18th at 6:30 p.m. We will be making ornamental stars from book pages. Free! Patrons are welcome to bring cookies to share

and we will supply the cocoa and marshmallows!

Holiday Break Reading Challenge for Youth begins December 20th and wraps up January 4th. Be sure to get your challenge sheet at the circulation desk. There will be a party on January 4th at 1:00 p.m. with prize drawings and a movie at 2:00 p.m. It will be a great day to be at the Library!

Movie— Get ready for an exciting adventure with a family of supers! Yes, it's the long-awaited sequel! Showing at 2:00 p.m. on December 21st—snacks provided!

Teen/Adult Escape Room is on December 22, at 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. and December 29th at 10:00 a.m. — 2:00 p.m. Register your team of 4-10 players to solve the mystery. Be sure to register at the circulation desk or by calling. Each session is one hour in length.

Kicking off our 12 Days of Holiday Break Fun—

Starting on December 23rd all day with a Lego Challenge! All ages welcome to compete. Sorry, no details, just show up ready to build!

December 24th— All day—Cookies and Cocoa

December 27th— 6:00-8:00 p.m.— Trivia Night—bring your family, friends, and neighbors! All ages welcome, teams of 4 or 5. Sign-up early!

December 28th—All day—Wii Day. Be prepared to play hard!

December 29th—Teen/Adult Escape Room. Register at desk for hour time slot.

December 30th— All day—Puzzle and Game Day with snacks!

December 31st—1:00 p.m.—Teen Craft (5th—12th grade) Wooden-letter decorating, 8” letter, design your own! Register for your letter, and pay \$4 fee prior to December 21st.

January 2nd—Youth Escape Room. Register at the desk for hour time slot.

January 3rd—Teen Escape Room. Register at the desk for hour time slot. 6:00—7:30 p.m.—Minute to Win it Competition and Board Game Night.

January 4th—1:00 p.m.—Youth Reading Challenge Party, 2:00 p.m. Movie

January 5th—All day—Scavenger Hunt Day.

January 6th—All day—Coloring Day for All!

Patrons can access many of our great **online resources** 24-hours a day. Ask at the desk for more information on Libby & Overdrive for eBooks and audiobooks that may be downloaded to your personal device! Or, learn a new language with Pronunciator.

WISE WORDS

“In most cases, being a good boss means hiring talented people and then getting out of their way.”

~ Tina Fey

TRANSFER STATION HOURS

Monday & Friday

9:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Tuesday

11:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Saturday

8:00 am.—Noon

Or by appointment
Tuesday, Wednesday
and Thursday

Green Notes ~ Tips for a Green Holiday



Go green this holiday season with three easy tips to save you money and reduce waste.

- ◆ **Buy something that will last.** Consider durability before you buy. Often, a cheaper item will wear out long before its more durable equivalent, which can be passed down to others. You don't want holiday toys to end up in the trash before the start of the new year.
- ◆ **Re-gift.** Have something you no longer want, like a good

book you've read, or a nice shirt you don't wear? Don't be shy about re-gifting. You'll extend the life of the item and pass it on to someone who will appreciate it.

For more tips on the Green Path to the Good Life, like the Wayne Green Team on Facebook or visit www.cityofwayne.org/greenteam.

The Fair Housing Act protects people from discrimination when they are renting, buying, or securing financing for any housing. The prohibitions specifically cover discrimination because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability and the presence of children.

If you believe you may be a victim of housing discrimination, contact HUD 1-800-669-9777 or your local Fair Housing representative:

Wes Blecke
306 Pearl Street
Wayne NE 68787
(402) 375-1733
wblecke@cityofwayne.org

YOUR CHOICE. YOUR RIGHT. YOUR HOME.

