



Federal Trade Commission Protecting America's Consumers

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Coming in 2011: New Labels for Light Bulb Packaging

Labels Will Emphasize Lumens, Not Watts, as a Measure of Bulb Brightness

Starting in mid-2011, the Federal Trade Commission announced today, consumers shopping for light bulbs will notice new labeling on packaging designed to help them choose among the different types of bulbs on the market – traditional incandescent bulbs, and newer high-efficiency compact fluorescent (CFL) and light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs. The new labels will enable consumers to save money by selecting the most efficient bulbs that best fit their lighting needs.

Under direction from Congress to re-examine the current labels, the FTC is announcing a final rule that will require the new labels on light bulb packages. For the first time, the label on the front of the package will emphasize the bulbs' brightness as measured in lumens, rather than a measurement of watts. The new front-of-package labels also will include the estimated yearly energy cost for the particular type of bulb.

While watt measurements are familiar to consumers and have been featured on the front of light bulb packages for decades, watts are a measurement of energy use, not brightness. As a result, reliance on watt measurements alone make it difficult for consumers to compare traditional incandescent bulbs to more efficient bulbs, such as compact fluorescents. A compact fluorescent bulb may be able to produce the same amount of brightness as a traditional incandescent bulb, while using significantly less energy, or watts. New energy standards mandated by Congress will effectively phase out traditional low-efficiency incandescent bulbs from the U.S. market over the next few years. The new labels that focus on brightness in lumens will help consumers make purchasing decisions as they transition to more energy-efficient types of bulbs.

Under the new rule, the back of each package of light bulbs will have a "Lighting Facts" label modeled after the "Nutrition Facts" label that is currently on food packages. The Lighting Facts label will provide information about:

- brightness;
- energy cost;
- the bulb's life expectancy;
- light appearance (for example, if the bulb provides "warm" or "cool" light);
- wattage (the amount of energy the bulb uses); and
- whether the bulb contains mercury.

The bulb's brightness, measured in lumens, and a disclosure for bulbs containing mercury, also will be printed on each bulb.

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	820 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$7.23
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
Life	1.4 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	
Warm ▲ Cool	
	2700 K
Energy Used	60 watts

Lighting Facts Per Bulb	
Brightness	870 lumens
Estimated Yearly Energy Cost	\$1.57
Based on 3 hrs/day, 11¢/kWh Cost depends on rates and use	
Life	5.5 years
Based on 3 hrs/day	
Light Appearance	
Warm Cool	
Energy Used	13 watts
Contains Mercury	
For more on clean up and safe disposal, visit epa.gov/cfl .	

New Back Label for Bulbs Containing Mercury

The new labeling requirements become effective one year from the date they are issued. The FTC also is seeking public comments on several issues that might be relevant to future changes to light bulb labeling requirements, such as whether new labeling requirements should be applied to candelabra bulbs.

Information on how to submit public comments can be found in a Federal Register notice that will be issued by the FTC and is available at: <http://www.ftc.gov/os/2010/06/P084206lamplabeling.pdf>. The vote approving the Federal Register notice was 5-0. The FTC will have more detailed information and consumer education available about the new labels early next year.

Copies of the Federal Register notice are available from the FTC's Web site at <http://www.ftc.gov> and from the FTC's Consumer Response Center, Room 130, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580. The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices and to provide information to help spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint in English or Spanish, click: <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/complaint.shtm> or call 1-877-382-4357. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft, and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to more than 1,800 civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad. For free information on a variety of consumer topics, click <http://ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm>.

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16 C.F.R. Part 305: Appliance Labeling Rule: Final Rule Amending the Lamp Labeling Requirements In the Appliance Labeling Rule, and Requesting Further Comment On Several Issues For Consideration In Any Subsequent Rulemaking

FTC File No. P084206

- [Text of the Federal Register Notice](#)
- [Light Bulb Label Examples](#)

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