

An Introduction to the Issues of Light Pollution



NOAA
Satellite photo revealing the estimated **30%** of all US outdoor lighting being directed skyward as waste. Conservatively estimated at **\$1.5 billion dollars in wasted electricity** yearly, this 30% requires the burning of **6,000,000 tons of coal** each year to generate this electricity waste.

Estimated by the
International Dark-Sky Association.

We all win

by correcting the problems of inefficient outdoor lighting at night.

- Many types of outdoor lighting designed for advertising, security and visibility are actually wasteful, invasive and a source of disabling glare.
- "Light trespass", the poor control of outdoor lighting which crosses property lines, detracts from our quality of life, and confuses the instinctive daily and seasonal cycles of animals and plants.
- Although perceived as a deterrent to crime, studies by the US Department of Justice* and the National Institute of Justice* show no conclusive evidence that lighting actually prevents crime.
- Public hazards have been created by the use of glaring, high-wattage floodlighting along roadways and business parking lots, shining directly in the driver's line of sight.
- Public safety is also being compromised by businesses competing with light levels to attract business. The eye's inability to adjust quickly to drastic changes from light to dark, leaves a driver temporarily blind when exiting an overlit business area at night. It is not uncommon to see businesses using 3 to 6 times the recognized, lighting industry recommendations for site lighting (IESNA).
- The recent awareness of global warming concerns, due in a large part to power plant emissions, now demands an effort to reduce our consumption of electricity.
- Because of this unnecessary condition, many of our children today have already lost much of the starry night sky behind the glow of wasted light, limiting their imaginations to the man-made boundaries around them.
- By correcting these outdoor lighting problems for the future we can save money and electricity, improve public safety and increase visibility, while reducing air pollution and green house gas emissions.

* "Study of Streetlighting And Crime" 7/77 by James M. Tien / US Dept. of Justice • www.darksky.org/ida/ida_2/info63.html

"Preventing Crime, What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising" A report to the US Congress / The National Institute of Justice • www.ncjrs.org/works/wholedoc.htm