

Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association

Lighting

Lighting provides another important surveillance aspect and a deterrent for would-be criminals. Any areas of use (walking trails, gathering points), parking areas, and the exterior of the building, particularly entrances/exits, should be well lit. Good lighting is one of the most effective crime deterrents! When used properly, lighting discourages criminal activity and enhances surveillance and reduces fear.

There are a couple of things to pay attention to when it comes to lighting. If you have too much light, you may cause more problems than benefits. Too much lighting will produce **glare** and could blind someone. Take a look at the two photos below, you can see how the light is blinding and hides the person.



Another concern with too much lighting is that it will **'trespass'** onto other property. The photo to the right shows how the light is 'trespassing' into the windows of the building. Now granted, you want to light a fair amount of area, but you should remember what exactly it is that you are illuminating. In this photo shown, the light is more than likely intended for the walkway, gathering area and/or parking area – not the second floor of the building!



To address these issues of glare and trespass, a **shield or cut off** can be used on the light fixture. What these items do is aim or directs the light to the intended area. Many communities are requiring the use of full cut off lighting in their zoning regulations; therefore we recommend that you check with your local municipality. The photos below show the difference between the two fixtures.



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When installing lighting, especially in a new construction—plan ahead! If planting trees or other landscaping, think about what may happen when the tree begins to grow; will it block the light fixture, rendering it obsolete?



So how much lighting will we need for the area? The lighting package will tell you how bright and how much the light output is. The amount of light coming from a light source is *luminous flux (lumens)* while the amount of light falling on a surface is *luminance (lux)*.

A general rule of thumb for a parking area is the height of the light pole multiplied by 4 will give the distance the light poles should be apart. For a building and the installation of wall packs (lights on the sides of buildings) it is the height of the wall pack multiplied by 6 will give you the distance that they should be placed apart.

Lastly, what type of lighting should we have. There are many types of bulbs and light that they emit. The trend lately has been to go with an LED light. Not only do they have a long life span and are energy efficient, they emit a bright and white light, affording good color rendition. We are seeing many municipalities and businesses going this route.

Types of Lighting

Incandescent

These are the most common lights in our homes. Incandescent lights do not have a long life span and produce quite a bit of heat.



Fluorescent

Used in both home and commercial settings. Three to four times more efficient than the incandescent and lasts up to ten times longer. Also has a low heat output.



Pressurized sodium

These are most commonly used as street lights and exterior lights at businesses. They cut through fog well but have poor color rendition due to their “yellowish” light.



Metal Halide

These are often found in gymnasiums or warehouses. They take a bit warm up’ but emit a white light that is excellent for color rendition. However, they have a higher initial cost than the sodium lights.



LED

LED lights have a high initial cost but are extremely cost efficient and have a long life span. They emit a white light and do not have the warm up time that metal halide does.



For more information on lighting or any other crime prevention need, contact your local crime prevention officer.