Quality of Light...Quality of Life

Our night skies, enjoyed and appreciated by countless generations of people, are in jeopardy of disappearing due to the pallor of light pollution. Each year the night sky becomes slightly brighter, causing fewer stars to be visible. It does not need to be that way. There are sensible, economical steps to prevent the unnatural night from spreading. Proper outdoor lighting methods greatly reduce sky glow while maintaining safety and providing economic benefits.

When using standard light fixtures, light is directed upwards causing the sky to brighten. Shielded fixtures direct their light downwards where it is needed, not wastefully into the sky. Since all of the light illuminates the desired area, lower wattage bulbs can be used, saving electricity – and money! $ Shielded fixtures also give the added benefit of reducing annoying, if not dangerous, glare. They help prevent glare by blocking light from directly entering your eyes, making it easier the see when driving.

Too often, homeowners ineffectually and wastefully use outdoor lighting as a means to prevent crime and increase safety. Properly shielded and correctly directed lights reduce glare, revealing what lies in the shadows. Only People affect change!

- Use shielded fixtures with lower wattage bulbs,
- use motion sensors where it's appropriate, and
- turn off any unneeded lights.

A new shopping development near National Park land.

Lighting: the Good and the Bad

Take a look at these lighting situations:

What is right about this wall pack fixture?
- It is shielded, reducing glare.
- The light is directed downward, where it is needed.

What is wrong with this street light?
- It is not shielded.
Unfortunately, this type of fixture is too common along our roads.

What is right about this street light fixture?
- It is a full-cutoff, shielded fixture.
- The light is directed downward where it is needed.

What is wrong with this lighting scenario?
- The light does not illuminate the area near the door.

What is wrong about these lights?
- They don't illuminate the ground.
- A substantial amount of light escapes upwards.
- They are not shielded.

Architectural lights, such as these, are very appealing in the daytime, but do a poor job illuminating the desired area. More of their light is directed upward than downward.

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When talking about light pollution, people think of two things: Crime and Safety, and “Hey, let me tell you about my neighbor's light!”

What is wrong with this lighting scenario?
- Neither light is shielded.
When a bad fixture fails to give proper illumination, a second ineffective fixture is often installed.

A new shopping development near National Park land.

Can you see the man standing in the shadow?

When a new development near a national park doesn't provide proper illumination, it can create a safety hazard for drivers.

Bright store lighting easily distracts drivers.

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