

LIGHT POLLUTION IN DOYLESTOWN TOWNSHIP

AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

For most of our history our spectacular universe has been visible in the darkness of the night sky. But today, the increased development and our living closer together with the corresponding increase in inappropriate and unshielded outdoor lighting, has resulted in light pollution. Have you looked up at night lately? Or tried to show your children the stars? The universe is going away, already gone for many due to urban sky glow.

Why use outdoor lighting at night? To see at night, for security, safety, utility, and for an attractive nighttime environment. But not all lighting is good lighting.

What are the adverse effects of poor nighttime lighting? Urban sky glow: we do not need all that light up there; light shining upwards does not help our visibility on the ground. Glare: it can blind you to activity within the glare and it never helps visibility or safety. Light trespass: many lighting installations bother us more than they help. The wasted light shines into our neighbor's yard or windows. As with noise pollution, we do not need any of this bad lighting. Energy waste: lighting areas that do not need lighting at times when it is not needed and with inefficient lighting equals a waste of our money.

What can we all do?

Doylestown Township Code has requirements for all outdoor lighting. It must be shielded to reduce overhead glow and directed downwards so as not to be a nuisance to traffic or neighbors. The Code says, "No bare or reflected lights shall be visible beyond the lot line." One common culprit is bare flood light bulbs above the garage doors or over the back lawn.

So, use good lighting. Shine the light down. Use time controls. Design and install lighting to ensure glare is minimized. Use the right amount of light for the task. Energy efficiency will save you money.

Review your own lights. Go outside tonight with your outdoor lighting on. Can you see your bulbs from the street? Are your lights shining onto your neighbors' property or into their windows? If so, there are some simple ways to correct the nuisance.

Help is available.

There are some very informative websites that offer practical advice on how to address this form of pollution. These sites have links to shielded fixture suppliers, advice on how to approach a neighbor whose light is causing a nuisance and tips on good and effective lighting design: www.darksky.org and www.POLCouncil.org For fixtures: www.starrynightlights.com. Also, you can ask for "dark sky" approved lighting at your local electrical supply stores. For those floodlights above the garage, look for the clip-on Parshield(R) Glare Visor, a very simple remedy at www.parshield.com.

Give us all, but especially the children of Doylestown, a safe, well-lit Township, but one with a magical starry night.

Unshielded lights
produce glare,
light trespass,
and uplight



Stop glare, waste, and trespass

***Be good neighbors
shield your lights!***

Shielded lights
prevent glare,
stop trespass,
and light the ground



Lighting done right

***Be good neighbors
shield your lights!***