

**Outdoor Lighting Notice:** Full compliance with the city’s outdoor lighting regulations begins on Nov. 16, 2018. In 2003, the City of Boulder adopted regulations limiting and restricting outdoor lighting output and fixture design to reduce light pollution, promote energy efficient design and restrict lighting such that excess light does not go into the sky. The Outdoor Lighting Regulations (found in [Section 9-9-16, “Outdoor Lighting,” B.R.C. 1981](#)) have been implemented and enforced through building permits and complaints for 15 years. When originally adopted, the Outdoor Lighting Regulations included a 15-year period for all properties to become fully compliant (for those that did not receive permits or did not change out fixtures to compliant fixtures). This period was set to expire on July 15, 2018. City Council extended this date to Nov. 15, 2018.

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### What does this mean for my property?

If you have not obtained a building permit since 2003 that demonstrated full compliance with the Outdoor Lighting Regulations or you are not certain your property complies, you will need to work toward bringing your outdoor lighting into compliance. Full compliance will technically be required on **Nov. 16, 2018**.

- **Commercial, Industrial, Mixed Use or Multi-family Residential seeking a Building Permits:** Any building permit submitted after that date will require **full compliance** with Section 9-9-16, B.R.C. 1981. To avoid any permitting issues/delays, it is strongly suggested that you bring your site into compliance at your earliest convenience.
- **Noncompliant Commercial, Industrial, Mixed Use or Multi-family Residential properties not seeking a Building Permit:** Properties not seeking permits are encouraged to work toward compliance before the city begins any active enforcement action on properties. City Council requested that the city’s enforcement plan begin active enforcement on **Nov. 2019**. This allows properties not seeking building permits **ONE YEAR** (after Nov. 2018) to upgrade their outdoor lighting to comply. Complaints by community members may require immediately compliance.
- **Rental Licenses (multi-family):** If you are seeking approval of a **rental license** for an apartment building, a recent ordinance will require inspections for compliance with the Outdoor Lighting Regulations before the rental license is issued. If a site with apartments does not have compliant lighting, a “reduced term” license will be issued. In such case, the property owner of the apartment building or buildings will have **ONE YEAR** (after the approval of the rental license) to bring the site into compliance. Once compliant, a full term, four-year license can be obtained. Properties that are not compliant after one year will *not* be granted a rental license until the outdoor lighting is upgraded.
- **Rental Licenses (single-family):** If you are seeking approval of a rental license for a single-family home, compliance with the Outdoor Lighting Regulations will be required before any rental license is issued. In such cases that outdoor lighting is not complaint, an inspector will request that the necessary upgrades (discussed below) will need to occur before the license is issued.

## How do I upgrade my outdoor lighting to comply?

- **Single-family Residential (ownership or rental):** Outdoor Lighting compliance with single-family homes is relatively straightforward and can be met by doing the following:
  - ✓ Install only outdoor light fixtures that are 900 Lumens or less (no more than a **60-Watt** Incandescent bulb or **15-Watt** LED bulb) / No bulbs over **3,000 (K) Kelvin** in correlated color temperature (CCT) (Lighting packaging includes this information in “Lighting Facts”)
  - ✓ Outdoor light bulbs must be within a fixture that aims light downward and obscures view of the light bulb from view by a material that blocks or diffuses the light / No light may project upward.
  - ✓ Outdoor bulbs must not project below the encasing fixture (see ‘Fully Shielded Fixtures’ below) or be visible through clear glass.
  - ✓ Spot lights (or flood lights) are permitted as long as they are aimed downward, do not exceed 1200 Lumens (roughly 75-Watts Incandescent or 19-Watts LED) and are on a motion sensor and timer that turns the light off after 5 minutes of activation. See Section 9-9-16(d), B.R.C. 1981 for more information.

Examples of “fully shielded fixtures”:



Example of spot light



- **Multi-family Residential, Commercial, Mixed-Use, Industrial or Public:** Multifamily residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial or public buildings are required to meet specific regulations on the design and output of each light, as well as limits on the height of lighting poles. Lights are required to be full cut-off (as discussed above), aim downward and must not exceed specified lighting outputs (measured in Lumens) for each type of fixture, or maximum readings on the ground (measured in Footcandles) across the entire site. Specific footcandle maximums apply to different parts of a site or building. For instance, light levels can be higher at building entries and parking areas as compared to other common areas on the site. Lighting levels are required to drop to nearly 0 footcandles at any property line. No bulbs are permitted to be above **3,000 (K) Kelvin** in correlated color temperature. See [section 9-9-16, “Outdoor Lighting”, B.R.C. 1981](#) for these specific requirements.

To determine compliance with the specifications in Section 9-9-16, B.R.C. 1981, a lighting certification shall be completed by an architect, electrical engineer, electrical contractor, or lighting consultant responsible for the plans or the final installation. If existing lighting is not compliant or changes include upgraded lighting, lighting plans will be required as part of building permit applications to show compliance but may also be necessary as part of any rental license for a multi-family residential project or in response to any lighting related complaint to confirm compliance with the Outdoor Lighting Regulations.

## Questions?

Questions can be directed to the City of Boulder Planning and Development Services Center at 303-441-1880 or at [plandevlop@bouldercolorado.gov](mailto:plandevlop@bouldercolorado.gov).