



## **Safety Alert from External Sources**

### **ENERGY SAVING BULBS**

Energy Saving bulbs have been in existence for a long time now. As the name indicates, these bulbs are more effective as compared to an ordinary bulb in terms of power consumption. Most of us are currently using these bulbs in order to save electricity consumption and ultimately the electricity bill.



Energy Saving Bulbs will come in different shapes on the market with different ratings in terms of Voltage or Watts and they will definitely save our pockets especially that, we are buying electricity in our respective houses.

#### **\* Some Health and Safety Issues on the Low – Energy Light Bulbs**

However, these types of bulbs, if broken, cause serious danger.

- If one breaks, everybody will have to leave the room for at least 15 minutes, because it contains Mercury (poisonous) which causes migraine, disorientation, imbalances and different other health problems, when inhaled.
- It causes many people with allergies, severe skin conditions and other diseases just by touching this substance or inhaling it.
- Do NOT clean the debris of the broken bulb with a vacuum cleaner, because it would spread the contamination to other rooms in the house when using the vacuum cleaner again.
- It must be cleaned up with a normal broom or brush be kept in a sealed bag and disposed of right away from the house in a bin for hazardous materials.

**WARNING: Mercury is dangerous, more poisonous than lead or arsenic!**

Below is the advice on what to do if a Low-energy light bulb breaks be it at home or areas where these bulbs can be found:

1. Evacuate the room, taking care not to step on the shards of glass littering the floor
2. Do not use a vacuum cleaner to clear up the mess as the machines sucking action could spread toxic mercury droplets around the house.
3. Put on rubber gloves and sweep the debris onto the dustpan
4. Place the remains in a plastic bag and seal it
5. Do not put the plastic in a normal household bin
6. Instead, place it in a municipal recycling bin for batteries which also contain mercury or take it to a council dump where it can be disposed of safely. As LMC Residents, we can make use of separate Black Refuse Bags with Emphasis on advice number 5 above
7. Try not to inhale dust from the broken bulb



## **DISPOSAL OF FLUORESCENT LAMPS AT END-OF-LIFE**

Lighting Council Australia is fully committed to environmental responsibility and works closely with Australian and State Government regulators on environmental issues.

Examples of environmentally responsible programs undertaken by Australian regulators with the full support and co-operation of Lighting Council include introducing minimum energy performance standards for fluorescent lamps and ballasts, introducing a new mandatory standard stipulating maximum mercury content for fluorescent lamps and more recently a program to phase-out inefficient incandescent lamps.

The objective of this guide is to provide information on the safe disposal of fluorescent lamps.

### ***Fluorescent Lamps***

Fluorescent tube lamps have been in common use for over 60 years and along with energy efficient compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) they require a small amount of mercury to enable them to operate.

Modern CFLs in particular contain very small quantities of mercury – between 2 and 5mg (to put this into perspective, a single dental filling contains between 60 and 200 times the amount of mercury than a modern CFL).

Because of their greater energy efficiency, using CFLs results in less mercury being released into the environment than using the equivalent incandescent lamps. This is because burning coal to produce electricity releases mercury into the atmosphere.

The Australian Government's program to phase-out inefficient incandescent lamps is expected to save four million tonnes of greenhouse gases a year, or the equivalent of taking one million cars off the road.

## ***Safe disposal of lamps***

Lighting Council Australia supports an environmentally responsible practice in disposing of mercury containing lamps. Current Lighting Council initiatives include working with the Victorian Government on a pilot lamp recycling program. This program will be completed by the end of 2008 and is expected to provide information which will assist consideration of a national lamp recycling scheme.

Household lamp disposal facilities currently exist in NSW and Victoria:

### *New South Wales*

*CleanOut* is a free service for the safe disposal of a range of common household chemicals and goods, including lamps.

See: [www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/cleanoutguide.htm/](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/households/cleanoutguide.htm/)

Enquiries: [info@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@environment.nsw.gov.au) or phone the Environment Line 131 555.

### *Victoria*

*Detox your Home* offers a free service for disposing of fluorescent lamps.

See: [www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for\\_households/dropoff\\_points\\_2826.html](http://www.resourcesmart.vic.gov.au/for_households/dropoff_points_2826.html)

### *Local councils*

In addition, some local councils now have waste collection schemes in place to collect products such as batteries, paint, motor oil and fluorescent lamps for residential consumers. For further information, contact your council.

### *Lamp recycling facility*

The following company in Melbourne recycles fluorescent lamps:

CMA Eco Cycle

5-11 Reo Crescent

Campbellfield Victoria 3061

Tel: 03 9308 9415

<http://www.cmaecocycle.net>