

Holiday Decorating Ideas

Deck The Halls For Less

(NAPSA)—The holiday season is a time for making your house bright and festive as the days shorten. Now, new technology lets you light your home without lightening your wallet.

Most decorative holiday light strings use standard incandescent bulbs. However, these bulbs consume a great deal of electricity and frequently burn out. That's why more and more people are turning to Light Emitting Diode products, also known as LEDs. You may know these little lights as the red numbers on the display of your clock radio or the multiple red dots in the third-brake light on several different automobiles, but now these colorful light sources are making inroads into the festive holiday lighting market. The U.S. Department of Energy is working cooperatively with research institutions and private companies to accelerate the development of better and more efficient LEDs to replace traditional lightbulbs.

LEDs are solid-state devices that have the potential to revolutionize the lighting industry, with the promise of highly efficient and durable products. LEDs, when used in a decorative holiday light string, consume approximately 0.05 watts of power—nearly 90 percent less power than a regular incandescent minilight. LED holiday lights also last a long time and produce little heat, helping to eliminate fire hazards. Not only that, but LED lamps will not shatter, and they are rated for thousands of hours of service—more than 20 times longer than incandescent strings.

LED strings are available in a broad range of colors, and include



You can save energy and money by using timers and LEDs this holiday season.

regular strings as well as styles such as icicle-style strings, rope lights and holiday ornaments. LED strings are available with lamps that change from one color to another and with commercial-quality plugs that allow more than 100 strings to be connected end to end. There are even screw-in LED bulbs for converting your incandescent strings to LED—enabling consumers to save up to 90 percent of the electricity that would have been consumed by the incandescent lamp. LED strings give you a different look as well. Where traditional lights blink on and off, LEDs can offer a shimmering effect, making LEDs an attractive choice for beautiful holiday decorating. You can also create interesting effects—and save money—by using timers. Timers let you have lights on after dark when they're visible—and when you're home to enjoy them. Some companies are also offering LEDs connected to solar panels—which makes them cost nothing to operate. To learn more about LED lighting, visit <http://www.netl.doe.gov/ssl/>.