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Brighten Your Holidays with LED Lights

Driving through neighborhoods this holiday season, you may have noticed that some holiday lights are brighter and more vividly colored than others. According to the American Lighting Association (ALA) the reason for the added brilliance is that more and more homeowners are opting to decorate with LED lights instead of the traditional incandescent type.

“Incandescent bulbs have been used for decorating holiday trees since 1882, shortly after Edison invented and demonstrated his first practical incandescent bulbs on New Year’s Eve in 1879,” says Terry McGowan, ALA director of technology. “Now, more than a century later, incandescent holiday lights are being phased out as LED bulbs appear in a multitude of types, colors, sizes and string configurations.”

Compared to strings of incandescent bulbs, LEDs offer:

- Longer bulb life (3-year warranties; average life up to 100,000 hours)
- Energy savings (16-17 watts of savings for a 25-foot light string) – a reduction of more than 75 percent
- Bright colors – LEDs generate only the desired color; incandescent bulbs use color filters which waste light
- Cool operation – LEDs have no hot filament inside; bulbs remain cool

What’s New This Year?

- Miniature Light Strings. LEDs are small and can be fabricated into tiny dots of light. American Lighting, Inc. (www.Americanlighting.com) calls these “Dew Drop” lights. Strings of these tiny cool-operating lights can be used to decorate foliage, live plants or a floral centerpiece. The light strings are made in various colors and operate at low voltage, and some strings are designed for battery operation so no power cords are required.
- Tree wrapping. Strings of lights closely wrapped around the base of deciduous trees and then up into the branches give a festive look to even small trees or shrubs. The secret is to use strings of lights with six inches or less between bulbs, which can be wrapped around the trunk and limbs with no more than three inches between the layers of wrapped wiring.
- Magnetic sockets. Sockets designed to be used with standard screw-in incandescent or LED bulbs are available with built-in magnets that hold tightly to any ferrous metal. A narrow metal backing strip can be used to quickly mount lights in a straight line, making installation, take-down or spacing adjustments easy. The magnets keep the lights in line, and hold tightly in all weather conditions.

For more LED lighting tips, be sure to visit us at www.genielighting.com.