

ECOHOLIC

BY ADRIA VASIL

Bright ideas

With Canada's light bulb crackdown fast approaching, which bulbs will keep your green cred burning brighter longer?

By ADRIA VASIL, NOW, November 14, 2013



INCANDESCENT

After a century of lighting up our lives, it's time the classic incandescent bulbs got the boot. Sorry. They're seriously inefficient, wasting most of their energy as heat, and no matter what the package says, 1,500 hours isn't really a "long life." As of January 1, 75- and 100-watt incandescents will be MIA, but lower wattages will have until the end of 2014 to clear out. No hoarding, please. \$1.50/4.

Score: N



EDISON BULB

These vintage throw-backs are all the rage, but will the nation's hipsters get to keep their retro incandescents come ban time? Officials say if they're under 250 lumens (as are all the Edisons I spotted at Canadian Tire), yes, they're exempt. Now these aren't exactly efficient, but you can get more life for your buck if you look for Edisons that advertise a lifespan of 3,000 hours. \$10/1

Score: NN



HALOGEN

Tungsten halogens are a type of incandescent, and the bulb-shaped ones were going to be phased out. Alas, it looks like Canada will be harmonizing with the U.S. and letting halogens stay. You can even get the exposed raw filament feel of retro Edisons if you like. They're supposed to burn for 2,500-3,000 hours, though Noma's seem to burn out fast. The feds say bulb-shaped halogens should be at least 28 per cent more efficient than conventional bulbs. Mercury-free. \$5.99/2

Score: NNN



COMPACT FLUORESCENT

Yes, these mascots of the modern green movement are up to 75 per cent more energy-saving than ye olde classics and are supposed to last 10,000 hours. But there's been a lot of griping about wonky lighting hues, dimming woes, electromagnetic sensitivities and the stress of mercury cleanup if the bulb breaks. Keep in mind, not all CFLs are created equal: Philips, Sylvania and Feit are lower in mercury than most, and some are shatter-resistant. \$9.99/2

Score: NNNN



LEDs

Okay, these puppies used to cost a day's salary and emit less light than a cellphone, but things have changed. You can now get a good 60-watt equivalent in a pretty bulb shape from \$10. LEDs are at least 80 per cent more efficient than incandescents, plus they last 20 to 25 times longer than halogens – from 25,000 to 100,000 hours making them cheaper in the long run. Dimmable and mercury-free. Philips makes some good ones in nice warm tones. From \$10/1

Score: NNNNN