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Obama Toughens Rules for Some Lighting

By [KATE GALBRAITH](#)

[President Obama](#) announced tougher energy efficiency requirements for certain types of fluorescent and incandescent lighting on Monday, the latest step in the administration's push to cut the country's energy use.

The [new rule](#), scheduled to take effect in 2012, will cut the amount of electricity used by affected lamps by 15 to 25 percent and save \$1 billion to \$4 billion a year for consumers, the White House said.

"Now I know light bulbs may not seem sexy," Mr. Obama said, "but this simple action holds enormous promise because 7 percent of all the energy consumed in America is used to light our homes and our businesses."

Of the two types of lighting covered by Monday's announcement, the most important is "general service fluorescent lamps," which commonly take the form of tubular office lights (but do not include the squiggly [compact fluorescents](#) commonly found in home lamps).

The other type of lighting covered by the new rule is incandescent reflector lamps; these cone-shaped fixtures can often be found in track lighting.

"We believe this will be the biggest efficiency savings from any appliance standard ever," said Steven Nadel, executive director of the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, an advocacy organization.

The Energy Department has not updated the efficiency requirements for these lighting types since they were established by Congress in 1992. The department was supposed to update the requirement in 1997, according to Mr. Nadel, but it fell well behind on this and other appliance standards. In 2006 a federal court settlement required the department to move expeditiously to clear its backlog.

A broader push is under way to make lighting more efficient, aided by improving technologies. A 2007 energy bill mandated stronger efficiency requirements for the pear-shaped incandescent bulbs commonly found in homes. New efficiency requirements for two more types of lighting, floor and table lamps and outdoor lighting fixtures, are under consideration in Congress.

Susan Bloom, a spokeswoman for Philips, a major lighting manufacturer, said that her team was still combing through the lengthy document, but strongly supported the Energy Department's

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efforts. "We're all about helping to increase energy efficiency standards for lighting," she said.

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