



GUIDANCE ON ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE FOR FLUORESCENT AND HIGH INTENSITY DISCHARGE LIGHT FITTINGS

Lighting Council New Zealand fully supports requirements in the Wiring Rules (AS/NZS3000 & its related AS/NZS 3760) for regular maintenance for the safe and efficient operation of electrical appliances including Fluorescent and HID light fittings common in commercial and industrial properties. New guidelines issued to this end are designed to ensure efficient operation and reduce the risk of failure.

“All electrical technology generates heat, creating a fire risk if not properly maintained. In the interests of industry best practice and public safety, we have reviewed how best to ensure Fluorescent and HID light fittings do not pose an unnecessary risk” said Richard Ponting, Chief Executive Officer, Lighting Council New Zealand.

Most Fluorescent and HID light fittings supplied and installed in New Zealand in the past 25 years contain power factor correction capacitors and, in the case of fluorescent types, glow starters. Regular maintenance, checking and replacement of these components is essential to ensure they operate safely and efficiently. Lack of regular maintenance or a failure to replace aged or damaged components, particularly capacitors, reduces efficiency and performance and may create a risk of failure.

It is recommended that commercial and industrial property owners take the following advice to appropriately maintain their Fluorescent and HID light fittings:

- At least every three years and whenever Fluorescent and HID tubes are replaced, Fluorescent and HID light fittings need to be checked to ensure that there are no signs of ageing or damage in any components such as capacitors, ballasts, lamp holders and starters.
- Any capacitors, ballasts, lamp holders or starters showing signs of ageing should be replaced immediately.
- Capacitors have a life span of between five to ten years. They must be replaced at or prior to 10 years. Ensure that the replacement capacitors and ballasts meet the lighting manufacturer’s specification for the lamp in question.
- Maintain a maintenance log and/or record on the component itself, the dates it has been checked and the dates any components have been replaced.
- Avoid the application of unnecessary external force when carrying out checks/maintenance. Do not use any components that are dropped or damaged.
- Any light fittings that are subject to permanent or frequent external heat will require more regular checking and maintenance. They should be checked at least every six months and, where external temperatures are particularly high, the light fitting should be relocated if at all possible.

“Responsible commercial and industrial property owners/operators are obliged to and will already have robust plans in place for regular, routine maintenance. While regular maintenance of Fluorescent and HID light fittings does require a commitment from property owners, this should be viewed in the context of improved performance and risk management,” said Mr. Ponting.

For further detailed information, including what to look for in checking for signs of ageing or a need to replace components, go to www.lightingcouncil.org.nz/bulletins