

**FACT: They only contain a very small amount of mercury**

CFLs contain just a few milligrams of mercury, about the size of the tip of a ball-point pen. A typical body temperature thermometer contains around 0.5 grams<sup>1</sup> of mercury – that's over 100 times more than a CFL!

**FACT: CFLs are a more environmentally-friendly option than old-style light bulbs**

Despite the presence of mercury, energy saving lamps are still the environmentally friendly option.

Mercury vapour from the burning of fossil fuels is the largest source of environmental and human mercury contamination. Widespread use of CFLs reduces energy consumption, and can therefore reduce mercury released into the atmosphere.

**FACT: They're low-risk, even if broken**

The small amount of mercury in a single CFL should not put you at risk, even if it's broken – just follow the Ministry for the Environment's guidelines on their website for safe clean-up.

**FACT: There are ways to dispose of them safely**

The Ministry for the Environment is working with the lighting industry to develop further initiatives around safe disposal or recycling.

Ask your local electrical contractor or lighting supplier if they provide a drop-off service for CFLs. Alternatively, ask your local council if they operate a drop-off service, such as an annual hazardous waste collection. Not all areas will have a service. A final option is to wrap it in newspaper and dispose with your household rubbish.

<sup>1</sup> US Environmental Protection Agency

For more information on clean up and disposal of CFLs see the Ministry for the Environment's website at [www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste)



Light bulbs that use less energy: a covered CFL (LEFT) and a new generation halogen incandescent (RIGHT). Both are efficient.



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sustainability

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# ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHT BULBS



## THE FACTS



**FACT: Old-style light bulbs are really inefficient**

Only 5% of the energy used in a traditional incandescent light bulb makes light – the other 95% just makes heat.

**FACT: Old-style light bulbs will be replaced by more efficient bulbs**

The least efficient light bulbs are going to be progressively phased off the market from November 2009 as new, more efficient technologies become available.

This means the traditional incandescent light bulbs under 150W (i.e. the normal pear-shaped bulbs, including the most common 40W, 60W and 100W) will likely disappear from November 2009.

Candle-shaped incandescent light bulbs and other types of incandescent light bulb are unlikely to be affected until late 2010. Note that no bulbs will be phased out unless there are good alternatives available to replace them.

With the new range of efficient light bulb choices coming onto the market you may not even notice the difference – except to your power bills!

**FACT: You don't have to use CFLs**

Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) are not the only energy efficient light bulb option – though they're the most well-known and most efficient.

New generation halogen incandescent light bulbs – which look just the same as traditional light bulbs and do not contain mercury – are already available in some shops and by November 2009 you should be able to buy them nearly anywhere that stocks light bulbs.

From time to time you can buy energy efficient light bulbs for less because of Electricity Commission subsidies – visit [www.energywise.govt.nz](http://www.energywise.govt.nz) to find out what's available now.

## FIND THE RIGHT LIGHT

### Compact Fluorescent Lamps

Use up to 80% less electricity and can last 8-10 times as long. Some new ones can be used with dimmers.



### New generation halogen incandescent light bulbs

Use around 30% less electricity and last twice as long. Can be used with dimmers.

### Old standard bulbs

These are very inefficient.



## COMPACT FLUORESCENT LAMPS (CFLS)

They're the most well-known type of efficient light bulb – so here are the facts.

**FACT: They cost a little more to buy, but they're much cheaper to run**

Replacing your four most-used light bulbs with CFLs can save around \$50 per year in energy costs.

**FACT: CFLs are not all spiral-shaped - there's a huge range of choice**

CFLs come in many different shapes, including candles and more traditional shaped bulbs, which can be used in a wide range of fittings. Some of the newer ones can even be used in dimmers and down lights.

**FACT: CFLs have a range of colour options**

There's a range of colours, including warm white (the same as standard light bulb colour) and cool white (cooler colour, good for over work benches).

For more information visit:  
[www.energywise.govt.nz](http://www.energywise.govt.nz)