

CHAPTER 15.10 OUTDOOR LIGHTING CONTROL

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15.10.010 Purpose And ~~Intent As Relates To~~Guiding Principles For Residential, Commercial And Public Area Lighting

- A.** ~~The purposes of DCC 15.10 is-are to encourage the utilization of responsible lighting practices to provide safely lit areas for residents and visitors and to protect citizen health and safety and quality of life through the use of illumination that is energy efficient, prevents light pollution from light trespass, minimizes impact on wildlife and natural vistas, and recognizes Deschutes County's night sky as an economic and community natural resource, affirm the right of citizens in Deschutes County, Oregon to illuminate residential, commercial and public areas with lighting fixtures appropriate to the need while utilizing such illumination in a way that preserves rural and urban vistas and is confined to the property from which it is generated.~~

B. The following guiding principles have been developed by DarkSky International and the Illuminating Engineering Society. Guiding principles are not intended to be mandatory approval criteria.

1. Useful: Use light only if it is needed. All light should have a clear purpose. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and their habitats.
2. Targeted: Direct light so it falls only where it is needed. Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.
3. Low level: Light should be no brighter than necessary. Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.
4. Controlled: Use light only when it is needed. Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.
5. Warm-colored: Use warmer color lights when possible. Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

[Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025](#)

15.10.020 Purpose And Intent As Relates To Street Lighting

The purpose of DCC 15.10, as it relates to street lighting, is to affirm that the safety of citizens of Deschutes County, Oregon ~~have a right to the safety of~~ depends in part on well-lighted streets and highways, and to recognize that such illumination by nature cannot be confined to the property from which it is generated. Thus, certain ~~high wattage and low wattage~~ applications for the ~~propose~~ purpose of ~~highway street~~ safety ~~as defined below~~ are allowed under ~~these provisionsthis~~ ordinance.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

[Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025](#)

15.10.030 Conformance With Applicable Codes

All outdoor electrically powered illuminating devices shall be installed, used and maintained in conformance with the provisions of this code, the building code, the electrical code, and the applicable sign code of the jurisdiction in which a sign(s) is installed. No provision of this ordinance ~~are is~~ intended to pre-empt applicable state codes.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx \$x on x/x/2025

15.10.040 Approved Materials And Methods Of Construction Or Installation/Operation

The provisions of this code are not intended to prevent the use of any design, material, or method of installation or operation not specifically prescribed by this code, provided any such alternate has been approved. The building official may approve any such proposed alternate that: Provides an equivalent alternative design that does not exceed 1800 lumens nor project light off-site of the subject lot or parcel.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 \$1 on 8/31/1994

15.10.050-040 Definitions

For purposes of applying and enforcing this ordinance, ~~Whenever appropriate in applying the provisions of DCC 15.10,~~ the following words and phrases are defined as ~~set forth in DCC 15.10.055-110.~~ follows:

“Downcast” means lighting that is installed such that light rays from an outdoor light fixture are directed downward toward the ground and which includes a fixture shield parallel with the level ground.

"Exempt light fixtures" means outdoor artificial illuminating devices which are exempted from this ordinance by DCC 15.10.060.

“Farming practice” shall have the meaning set forth in ORS 30.930.

“Forest practice” shall have the meaning set forth in ORS 30.930.

"Fully shielded" means outdoor light fixtures that are shielded or constructed so that light rays emitted by the fixture are projected below the horizontal plane. [image to be inserted]

"Installed" means the initial installation of outdoor light fixtures following the effective date of this ordinance. Projects with approved construction plans prior to effective date of this ordinance are excluded from compliance with the ordinance in the initial installation only.

“Light Trespass” means a condition in which light emitted by a light fixture illuminates any area beyond the property lines of the property on which the fixture is installed. “Light Trespass” exists when a person is able to see illumination from an off-site light fixture. Light trespass does not include indirect reflection or scattering of light from mounting hardware or any other surfaces.

"Outdoor light fixtures" means outdoor artificial illuminating devices, outdoor fixtures, lamps and other similar devices, permanently installed or portable.

“Searchlight” means a light fixture generating parallel rays that may be oriented in any particular direction, often used to draw the attention to a place or event.

"Shielding" may be provided for a lighting fixture by the design of such fixture, or by an externally applied device such as a shroud or hood of metal, wood or painted glass that does not allow transmission of light.

"String lights" means electric lights on a wire, string, or cable used as decoration or for outdoor lighting.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

Amended by Ord. 2016-014 §1 on 7/1/2016

Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025

15.10.055 Definition; Outdoor And Greenhouse Light Fixtures

~~"Outdoor light fixtures" means outdoor artificial illuminating devices, outdoor fixtures, lamps and other similar devices, permanently installed or portable, used for flood lighting, general illumination or advertisement. Such devices shall include, but are not limited to, search, spot, agricultural production/grow, and flood lights for:~~

- ~~A.—Buildings and structures;~~
- ~~B.—Recreational areas;~~
- ~~C.—Parking lot lighting;~~
- ~~D.—Landscape lighting;~~
- ~~E.—Billboards and other signs (advertising or other);~~
- ~~F.—Street lighting;~~
- ~~G.—Product display area lighting;~~
- ~~H.—Building overhangs and open canopies;~~
- ~~I.—Holiday lighting;~~
- ~~J.—Greenhouse interior lighting.~~

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

Amended by Ord. 2016-014 §1 on 7/1/2016

15.10.060 Definition; Community Development Department

~~"Community Development Department" means the Community Development Department or designated representative(s) for the purposes of this ordinance.~~

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §2 on 10/11/1995

15.10.065 Definition; Exempt Light Fixtures

"Exempt light fixtures" means outdoor artificial illuminating devices which are exempted by DCC 15.10.170.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.070 Definition; Individual

"Individual" means any private individual, tenant, lessee, owner or any commercial entity including but not limited to companies, partnerships, joint ventures or corporations.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

15.10.075 Definition; Installed

"Installed" means initial installation of outdoor lighting fixtures following the effective date of this ordinance. Projects with approved construction plans prior to effective date of this ordinance are excluded from compliance with the ordinance in the initial installation only.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.080 Definition; Shielding

"Shielding" for the purpose of this ordinance is provided for a lighting fixture by design of such fixture or by an externally applied device such as a shroud or hood of metal, wood or painted glass that does not allow transmission of light.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

15.10.085 Definition; Fully Shielded

"Fully shielded" means outdoor light fixtures shielded or constructed so that light rays emitted by the fixture are projected below the horizontal plane.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.090 Definition; Partially Shielded

"Partially shielded" means shielding so that the edge of the shield is at or below the centerline of the light source or lamp so as to limit light emission above the horizontal plane to 10 percent or less.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

15.10.095 Definition; Directed Shielding

"Directed shielding" means shielding by design or external application that directs light downward and limits direct line-of-sight of a fixture's lamp to the property upon which the fixture is installed.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.100 Definition; Unshielded

"Unshielded" means light fixtures lacking any means to restrict the emitted light to below the horizontal plane.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.105 Definition; High Intensity Discharge Lamp Sources

"High intensity discharge lamp sources" means high pressure sodium, mercury vapor, metal halide, low pressure sodium, and other similar lamps.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.110 Definition; Luminous Tube Lighting

"Luminous tube lighting" means gas-filled tubing which, when subjected to high voltage, becomes luminescent in a color characteristic of the particular gas used, e.g. neon, argon, etc.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

15.10.115 Definition; Greenhouse

"Greenhouse" means any building that is constructed of glass, plastic, or other transparent material in which plants are grown under climate-controlled conditions, and includes hoop houses and other similar structures.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 2016-014 §1 on 7/1/2016

15.10.120-050 Requirements For Installation Of Outdoor Lighting

A. Except as exempted by provisions of this ordinance, ~~as of the date of adoption,~~ the installation and use of outdoor lighting fixtures shall be subject to the provisions of this ordinance.

B. All non-exempt outdoor lighting fixtures shall meet the following requirements:

1. Downcast. Lighting shall be downcast. Uplighting is prohibited.
2. Fully Shielded. Unless subject to an exemption, all light fixtures shall be fully shielded.
3. Light Trespass. Unless subject to an exemption, light trespass is prohibited for outdoor light fixtures.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

~~Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025~~

15.10.130 Submission Of Plans And Evidence Of Compliance With Code; Subdivision Plats

~~All proposed subdivisions and partitions within Deschutes County that include outdoor lighting fixtures or street lighting shall be subject to the provisions of this ordinance.~~

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.140 Shielding

~~All nonexempt outdoor lighting fixtures shall have shielding as required by the tables set forth in DCC 15.10.200.~~

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.150 Prohibitions

- A.—~~Laser Source Light. The use of laser source light or any similar high intensity light for outdoor advertising or entertainment, when projected above the horizontal is prohibited.~~
- B.—~~Searchlights. The operation of searchlights for advertising purposes is prohibited between eleven o'clock P.M. and sunrise the following morning.~~
- C.—~~Recreational Facilities. No outdoor recreational facility, public or private, shall be illuminated after eleven o'clock P.M. except to conclude a specific recreational or sporting event or any other similar activity conducted at or in the facility which was in progress under such illumination prior to eleven o'clock P.M., except that any outdoor recreational facility, public or private, which is illuminated with outdoor lighting fixtures conforming to this code may operate any time with such illumination.~~

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.160 Externally Lighted Outdoor Advertising Signs, Billboards

All externally lighted advertising signs and billboards will be illuminated by one of the following manners:

- A.—Top-mounted fixtures in which case such fixtures will conform to the shielding requirements as set forth in DCC 15.10.140.
- B.—Bottom-mounted fixtures in which case such fixtures shall be shielded either by application of external device or manufactured in such a way that upward and side directed light is confined to an area within four inches of the outermost surface of the sign's top and sides. Shielding will be constructed in such a manner that no reflective surface of the lighting fixture will extend past the limit of the shielding in the vertical plane when viewed from directly above. (See typical drawings – Table 1 and Table 2 attached.)

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995

15.10.170-060 Exemptions

Certain outdoor light fixtures are exempt from this ordinance, subject to the following standards:

A. Nonconformance.

1. All ~~other~~ outdoor light fixtures lawfully installed prior to and operable on the effective date of the requirements codified in this ordinance are exempt from all such requirements except ~~those regulated in DCC 15.10.150(A), (B) and (C) or~~ as follows:

- a. All replacement of outdoor lighting fixtures, as of the date of adoption, shall be subject to the provisions of this ordinance.
- b. Until a date ~~six-five~~ years after the date of adoption of this ~~code ordinance,~~
~~August 31, 2000:~~

- 2.—~~Fossil Fuel Light. All outdoor light fixtures producing light directly by the combustion of natural gas or other fossil fuels are exempt from all requirement of DCC 15.10.~~

B. Airport operations lighting and aircraft navigational beacons required by the Federal or State Law as established by the Federal Aviation Administration are permanently exempt from these provisions. All other airport outdoor lighting must conform to the intent of with this ordinance.

C.—~~Correctional Institutions. Exterior lighting for County correctional institutions shall be shielded high pressure sodium except at the immediate entry area, in which case other lighting may be used that conforms to the intent of this ordinance.~~

D.C. _____ Lights used for Holiday decorations for no more than 45 days cumulatively in a calendar year are exempt from the requirements of this ordinance.

~~E.D.~~ ~~Carnivals and Fairs~~ Special events that require the use of temporary outdoor lighting fixtures are exempt for up to 10 consecutive days, except that P permanent installations at dedicated sites must conform to the requirements of this ordinance.

~~F.~~ ~~Historical areas as designated by proper authority are exempt from the requirements of this ordinance. Use of the minimum illumination necessary to maintain public safety is encouraged.~~

~~G.~~ ~~Motion detector lights that operate automatically for periods of less than 20 minutes.~~

~~H.E.~~ U.S. flags displayed by top mounted lighting on a ~~24-24~~ hours basis.

~~I.F.~~ Internally lighted advertising signs.

~~G.~~ Bottom mounted fixtures on externally lighted advertising signs and billboards, in which case such fixtures shall be shielded either by application of external device or manufactured in such a way that upward and side directed light is confined to an area within four inches of the outermost surface of the sign's top and sides. Shielding will be constructed in such a manner that no reflective surface of the lighting fixture will extend past the limit of the shielding in the vertical plane when viewed from directly above.

~~J.H.~~ Temporary exemptions to the provision(s) of DCC Title 15 for five days cumulatively in a calendar year.

~~K.I.~~ Television or movie film productions are exempt except that permanent installations at dedicated sites must conform to the requirements of this ordinance.

~~L.J.~~ ~~Customary agricultural practices are exempt except that~~ Farming practices and forest practices. permanent ~~Permanent~~ installations ~~at dedicated sites~~ must conform to the requirements of this ordinance.

~~K.~~ Construction lighting necessary for an allowed use. ~~are exempt except that P~~ permanent installations at dedicated sites must conform to the requirements of this ordinance.

~~L.~~ Recreational Facilities. Outdoor light fixtures in association with a sports or recreational facility, public or private, prior to eleven o'clock P.M.

~~M.~~ String Lights, subject to the following standards:

- ~~1.~~ String lights shall not be used to solely illuminate or decorate landscaping features, walls, or fences.
- ~~2.~~ All installations of string lighting shall employ lamps that do not flash or flicker.
- ~~3.~~ In association with non-residential uses, string lights may be installed in outdoor dining and entertainment areas only and shall not be used to delineate or outline the edges of a building or for any other purpose. String lighting must be completely extinguished by the end of normal business hours.

4. In association with residential uses, string lighting may be used to delineate or outline the edges of patios, porches, decks and similar structures. String lighting must be completely extinguished by 11 P.M.

5. These limitations do not apply to string lights used as holiday lighting, which are instead subject to holiday lighting standards.

N. Publicly Owned Lighting. Publicly owned lighting (including streetlights located in the public right-of-way) shall be fully shielded but are not required to comply with light trespass requirements.

O. Searchlights. The operation of searchlights for purposes other than public safety or emergencies is prohibited.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

Amended by Ord. [99-022](#) §1 on 8/25/1999

[Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025](#)

15.10.180-070 Violations And Penalties

For any person, firm or corporation to erect, construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, improve or convert any lighting structure, or cause the same to be done, contrary to or in violation of any provision of this ordinance shall constitute a code violation subject to DCC 18.144.050.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

Amended by Ord. [2003-021](#) §33 on 4/9/2003

[Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025](#)

15.10.190-080 Violations Constitute Public Nuisance

Any outdoor lighting fixture erected, constructed, enlarged, altered, repaired, moved, improved, or converted, contrary to the provisions of this ordinance shall constitute a **public nuisance code violation** subject to DCC 18.144.040.

HISTORY

Adopted by Ord. [94-024](#) §1 on 8/31/1994

Amended by Ord. [95-063](#) §1 on 10/11/1995

[Amended by Ord. 2025-xxx §x on x/x/2025](#)

15.10.200 Code Requirements Tables For Shielding Tables 1, 2, And 3

A. ~~Outdoor lighting fixtures (except street lighting – see Table 2).~~

1. TABLE 1-WATTAGE-SEE SECTION 1-BELOW

LAMP TYPE	25	30	35	40	50	60	75	100	110 OR MORE
LOW PRESSURE SODIUM	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
HIGH PRESSURE SODIUM	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
METAL HALIDE	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
FLUORESCENT	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
QUARTZ	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
TUNGSTEN HALOGEN	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
MERCURY VAPOR	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD	DIRECTED SHIELD
INCANDESCENT	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	UNSHIELDED	DIRECTED SHIELD

1.
1. For the purpose of this section wattage ratings for lamp types will be for either a single lamp source or multiple lamp sources when installed in a cluster.

2. Lamp types not listed in the table may be approved for use by the building official providing installation of these lamps conforms to the lumen limits established in this section.

3. Glass tubes filled with argon, neon or krypton do not require shielding.

TABLE 2 TYPICAL LUMEN VALUES FOR VARIOUS LAMP WATTAGE **

WATTAGE	LOW PRESSURE SODIUM	HIGH PRESSURE SODIUM	METAL HALIDE	FLUORESCENT	QUARTZ	MERCURY VAPOR	INCANDESCENT
9				600			
18	1,800						
35	4,725	2,250					
40		4,000		2,250			480
50					1,400	1,140	480
55	7,925						
60							870
70		5,800	5,500				
75						2,800	1,190
90	14,400						
100		9,500	8,000			4,300	1,750
110				6,600			
150		16,000					2,850

QUARTZ	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING
MERCURY VAPOR	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING
INCANDESCENT	PARTIAL SHIELDING	PARTIAL SHIELDING	PARTIAL SHIELDING	PARTIAL SHIELDING	PARTIAL SHIELDING	PARTIAL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING	FULL SHIELDING

4. — 1. For the purpose of this section wattage ratings for lamp types will be for either a single lamp source or multiple lamp sources when installed in a cluster.
2. Lamp types not listed in the table may be approved for use by the building official providing installation of these lamps conforms to the intent of this code.

HISTORY
Adopted by Ord. 94-024 §1 on 8/31/1994
Amended by Ord. 95-063 §1 on 10/11/1995