

## **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 direct 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 three~~ 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 are exempt from the requirements of this ordinance. Seasonal holiday lighting from December 1 to January 15 is exempt. Other event-specific lighting for no more than fourteen cumulative days in a single**



calendar year also is exempt. "Event-specific lighting" means lighting other than seasonal holiday lighting, illuminated for a period not to exceed fourteen cumulative days in a calendar year, associated with a holiday or other special occasion.

~~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 per 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).~~