

## Outdoor Lighting

### Why we care

About 30 percent of the electricity used for lighting our homes is used for outdoor lighting. Outdoor lights reduce our ability to see the stars at night and negatively affect wild animals that rely on darkness when migrating, foraging for food, or mating. Outdoor lights may help with security, but when not used wisely they are a waste of energy. Reducing, or changing, outdoor lighting is one more action we can take to reduce our carbon footprint.

### Simple, positive change

- Install LED lamps. They are more expensive than CFLs but last three times as long and don't dim in the cold.
- Another good choice is a motion detector so that the light goes on only when someone approaches. Experienced thieves say that lights don't deter; they just show the thief where the shadows are. However, lights that go on unexpectedly are a problem for thieves.
- To minimize light pollution, [select fixtures](#) that shine lights down, not up. By shielding the fixture and directing the light to where it is needed, you can decrease the energy used to obtain the desired level of illumination.
- Draw your blinds or curtains to reduce indoor lighting from spilling outdoors, especially during bird migrations in the fall and spring.
- Take the Audubon of Portland pledge, [Lights Out for Birds](#).
- If the streetlight in front of your house shines light into your house, disrupting sleep, [request a shield from the Portland Bureau of Transportation](#).
- No matter what type of lamp you choose, use the lowest wattage that does the job.

**Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at [jeanne@earthleaders.org](mailto:jeanne@earthleaders.org).**