

## Fluorescent T5 Conversion Retrofit Kit

*As a nation we spend about one-quarter of our electricity on lighting, at a cost of more than \$37 billion annually, according to the US Department of Energy.*

**Dec. 8, 2009** - [PRLog](#) -- For commercial users lighting accounts for the single largest portion of their electric bills (30%) which means that lighting can be a big contributor to reducing energy costs.

Much of this expense is unnecessary. Lamp and ballast manufacturers have, over the past decade, brought products to market that can help cut lighting costs by 30% to 60% while enhancing lighting quality, maintaining appropriate light levels in the workplace, and reducing environmental impacts.

In this series of articles we will continue to highlight some of the easier and more cost effective lighting retrofits that business and facilities managers can implement. We feel very strongly about the fact that installing energy efficient lighting is one of the best things a building owner can do for the environment, and for their business. Energy efficient lighting reduces not only energy consumption – it reduces emissions from power plants and it improves the business owner's bottom line.

Fluorescent lighting is the most common technology for lighting spaces such as offices and classrooms, and is up to four times more efficient than the incandescent lamp. However, older, obsolete fluorescent lighting systems can result in poor light quality and flicker. Advancements in fluorescent lighting systems have resulted in the introduction of new systems that provide improved energy efficiency, lighting quality, and design flexibility. These technological advances have improved the energy efficiency of fluorescent lighting systems by 28-48% compared to older T12 lamps on magnetic ballasts and these often overlooked improvements can have a major positive impact on operating expenses.

The economic advantages of switching from T12 Lamp systems to T8 Lamps or T5 Lamp Systems have long been touted by the EPA, Energy Star and every lighting manufacturer on the planet. I will not review these figures in detail but generally one can expect energy savings of as much as 48% with 2-yr to 3-yr simple paybacks, longer lamp life and reduced maintenance costs. Further benefits are now available if the lighting upgrades qualify for the federal tax incentives available through the Commercial Building Tax Deduction (CBTD) established by the Energy Policy Act of 2005. In addition, some states offer incentive programs and, in many areas of the nation, utility incentive programs are also available.

However, amazingly enough industry sales data reveal that the less-efficient T12s still account for three out of every 10 4-ft fluorescent lamps sold in the United States! At Superior Lighting we have also found that many of our smaller customers are reluctant to make the switch to more efficient systems. The most common explanation given besides the upfront cost is the time, cost and headache associated with hiring an electrician to do the retrofit work.

Retrofitting a T12 fixture usually includes changing the ballast, sockets and lamps. We recommend this be done by a licensed electrician of course and seeing as how most small business do not have one on staff the retrofits do not get done. Most people do not want to deal with the hassle of finding a qualified electrician and prefer to live by the old adage that "if it ain't broke don't fix it."

The problem with that mindset is that thankfully the Government does not share it. Magnetic ballasts commonly used for the T12 lamps' (details here @ [http://www.superiorlighting.com/Lamp\\_Ballasts\\_s/8.htm](http://www.superiorlighting.com/Lamp_Ballasts_s/8.htm)) operation will start becoming part of the past on July 1, 2010, when their continued manufacture for commercial and industrial applications becomes

prohibited by U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) ballast efficiency regulations. This means that literally millions of existing T12 fluorescent lighting sockets will have to be upgraded sooner rather than later, because the lack of these replacement ballasts will make T12 lighting harder to maintain.

The good news for these customers is that Superior Lighting is now carrying a T5 retrofit kit for T8 and T12 light bulbs that is virtually “plug n play”. This new kit uses a reflected T5 light bulb and slim ballast that can be plugged into an existing T12 or T8 Light Bulb fixture without the need for complex rewiring. T5 light bulbs are the most efficient and long lasting of the fluorescent tubes and at 28 watts emit the same amount of light as a 40 watt T12 light bulb.

The old ballast is removed and the new kit is installed just like a regular light bulb with the ballast already wired into the kit. The kit also includes a reflector to emit the most amount of light and allow for the de-lamping of fixtures. We have found a 4 light T12 fixtures can now be replaced with just 2 of these T5 retrofit kits. Light output is maintained while system wattage is reduced from approximately 184 watts to 56 watts. Please click our energy savings calculator to see how the savings add up to \$56 a year and the simple payback can be reduced to only 12 months!

For more information about how your facility can take advantage of the new T12 Retrofit kit please see the product specifications at <http://www.superiorlighting.com> or call 1800-432-7995

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