

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Commissioner Susan Wefald**

**\*\*For Immediate Release\*\***

**Phone 701-328-2400**

**Commissioner Susan Wefald Challenges North Dakotans to Conserve Energy**

How many people does it take to change a light bulb?

Only one, but hopefully one person in each North Dakota household does it this year with a compact fluorescent bulb.

Commissioner Susan Wefald is challenging all North Dakota households to replace one or more incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs, which use up to 75 percent less energy than the old bulbs and can last up to 10 times longer.

According to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov), a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, North Dakotans can save \$1 million annually if every household replaced just one incandescent bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb.

“It’s amazing that so much energy and money can be saved by simply changing a light bulb,” said Commissioner Susan Wefald, president of the commission. “Everyone should take this small step towards energy conservation.”

Conserving electricity also reduces the strain on power plants and could reduce the need for new power plants in the future.

“Conservation is a worthwhile goal, because most of the utilities in North Dakota are projecting needing additional power in the future. Every megawatt of electricity that your electric company does not need to build helps keep your electric rates lower,” commented Wefald.

According to [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov), if all North Dakota households replaced just one bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb, they would save enough energy to light all the households in Bismarck for 110 days.

Commissioner Wefald has already replaced three light bulbs. “I prefer the “soft white” color bulbs because they provide light very similar in color to the light from incandescent bulbs,” she added.

Compact fluorescent bulbs have become common items that are found in a variety of stores.

Because they work differently than incandescent bulbs, a fluorescent bulb uses less wattage. For example, if you want to replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb with a fluorescent bulb that puts out the same amount of light, buy one that uses 9-13 watts.

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## Fluorescent Compact Light Bulbs

### Why buy Fluorescent Compact Bulbs?

Installing compact fluorescent light bulbs can save a significant amount of electricity in a home or business. Depending on the brand, they generally use up to 75 percent less electricity than a standard incandescent bulb. That energy savings means lower electricity bills and a way to reduce the strain on power plants and the environment.

According to energystar.gov, a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, if every home in America replaced just one incandescent light bulb with an ENERGY STAR qualified CFL, in one year it would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes and prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than 800,000 cars.

Because compact fluorescent bulbs have become a popular replacement bulb, they can be purchased in a variety of stores, even in your local grocery store. Although they cost more than incandescent bulbs, compact fluorescent bulbs may last up to 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs. They also come in a variety of sizes and shapes to fit almost any fixture or lighting decor. Like incandescent bulbs, compact fluorescent bulbs also come in a variety of shades of light for various lighting needs.

### Compact Fluorescent vs. Incandescent

A fluorescent bulb uses less wattage to produce the same amount of light. For example, if you want to replace a 40-watt incandescent bulb with a fluorescent bulb that puts out the same amount of light, buy one that uses 9-13 watts. The following chart shows a comparison between incandescent and compact fluorescent bulbs:

<b>Incandescent vs. Compact Fluorescent</b>		
<b>Incandescent Wattage</b>	<b>Light Output (Lumens)</b>	<b>Compact Fluorescent Wattage</b>
40	450	9-13
60	800	13-15
75	1,100	18-25
100	1,600	23-30
150	2,600	30-52

## **Federal Legislation Regarding Lighting**

In the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, Congress set an energy efficiency standard for general service incandescent lamps increasing efficiency standards by 30 percent and effectively phasing out most common types of bulbs by 2012 to 2014. This legislation also provides for consumer education and lamp labeling, and requires market assessments and a consumer awareness program.

## **Fluorescent Lights Contain a Small Amount of Mercury**

*The following information is from energystar.gov:* All fluorescent lights, including CFLs, contain a small amount of mercury. CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury sealed within the glass tubing – an average of 5 milligrams – about the amount that would cover the tip of a ballpoint pen. By comparison, older thermometers contain about 500 milligrams of mercury. It would take 100 CFLs to equal that amount.

## **Disposal of Fluorescent Bulbs**

The North Dakota Health Department encourages recycling of fluorescent bulbs, but households may put their compact fluorescent bulbs in the trash. If bulbs are placed in the trash, seal them in two plastic bags.

### **How should I clean up a broken fluorescent bulb?**

*The following information is from energystar.gov:*

1. Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
2. Carefully scoop up fragments and powder with stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a sealed plastic bag.
3. Place all cleanup materials in a second plastic bag.
4. If a fluorescent bulb breaks on a rug or carpet:
  - a. First remove all materials you can without using a vacuum cleaner. Sticky tape may be useful.
  - b. If vacuuming is needed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken, remove the vacuum bag and place in two sealed plastic bags in the outdoor trash.