



Ten steps to an effective lighting retrofit

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An LED lighting upgrade will improve lighting quality, increase productivity and reduce operating costs. It's a complex project. Get bottom line results from your investment by following these 10 steps to a successful retrofit.

1. Choose a full-service contractor

An LED upgrade is more than the installation of new lamps. Retrofits must focus on the quality of lighting, the quality of application itself, as well as energy efficiency. A contractor with expertise in design, savings analysis, installation, project management, and ongoing service for both efficiency and control will ensure the best result.

2. Start with a detailed audit

An initial lighting audit must collect an area-by-area count of all existing light fixtures, fixture loads, light level requirements, hours of operation, and tasks being performed. Otherwise you risk change orders, missed deadlines, additional costs to fix errors, and unsatisfying results.

3. Prioritize efficiency and controls

With California's Title 24 requirements, it's essential your lighting system is optimized for peak efficiency. The goals are to reduce power use via efficient fixtures and ensure lighting is used only when needed. With advanced lighting controls, you will be Title 24 compliant—lights will turn off or dim when not needed.

4. Avoid low bids

The money you might save with a low-ball bid can cost you thousands in missed energy savings, increased maintenance costs, and lost productivity. As you evaluate prospective contractors, meet with project managers, check references, visit previous installations, and make sure contractors use only the highest quality products and technology.

5. Create a full, comprehensive plan

This is not the time to hold back. It's time to list all the changes you need. Include all potential upgrades in your audit. A well-designed, thorough retrofit and installation guarantees monthly savings on electricity.

6. Ensure a smooth installation

To make sure installation goes well, review and document all key elements of the installation plan—including security access, product storage, recycling and project updates. Planning ahead will keep installation seamless for occupants and resolve unexpected problems quickly.

7. Ask for a full-time project manager

Confirm your lighting contractor provides a full-time, detail-focused project manager for the three distinct phases of your retrofit: 1) Development, 2) Implementation and 3) Service. Your dedicated project manager must have experience with running projects at similar facilities, as well.

8. Verify all warranties

An essential performance warranty covers materials, design, and installation.

9. Get immediate savings

The vast majority of lighting retrofit projects provide paybacks within three years, even without rebates. Rebates are great, but you shouldn't delay a project in order to wait for future rebates. A lighting upgrade can start saving you money immediately—savings that can soon fully fund the cost of the project.

10. Think long term

For the greatest long-term value, verify your retrofit project covers exterior and interior lighting efficiency and control. Evaluate your project based on savings, implementation, and warranty.

FYI: Lighting and your electric bill

How much of your electric bill is lighting? A typical office building is 35 to 40%, and a typical manufacturing facility is 15 to 20%. Expect electricity rates in California to rise 10 to 25 percent over the next 5 years.



California commercial property managers rely on LTSPS for lighting retrofits and maintenance, lighting controls, signing, security systems, and card access and EV chargers.