



County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use

PRIVATE OUTDOOR LIGHTING REGULATIONS

BUILDING DIVISION

The San Diego County Light Pollution Code regulates outdoor lighting with the intent to minimize light pollution in San Diego County and to protect against its detrimental effects on astronomical research at the Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. **This handout is intended to provide a summary of the code and should be used as a general guide only.** Section 6322 of the County Zoning Ordinance, as well as Title 24 (State Energy Conservation regulations) may also apply. For additional information regarding these and other requirements, please contact the San Diego County Chief Electrical Inspector at (858) 565-5920.

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The Ordinance classifies lighting requirements into three different categories:

- Class I: Commercial/Industrial Uses
- Class II: Parking and Security – All Uses
- Class III: Decorative – All Uses

The Ordinance also identifies two different lighting zones within the County (see map on reverse):

- Zone A: The areas bounded by 15-mile radii from Laguna and Palomar mountains.
- Zone B: The unincorporated area of the County not included in Zone A

The following is an aid to determining allowable lighting for a specific Zone and Class:

CLASS	LAMP TYPE	ZONE A	ZONE B
Class I	Low Pressure Sodium Lamps	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens or below	Fully Shielded (unless lighting is for commercial signs, then shielding is only required where feasible)	Fully Shielded (unless lighting is for commercial signs, then shielding is only required where feasible)
Class II	Low Pressure Sodium Lamps	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Prohibited, except fully shielded HPS is allowed for private roadways (private driveways excluded)
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens and Below	(a) Fully shielded fixture (luminaire) with motion sensor; or (b) Unshielded fixture (luminaire), 2000 lumens maximum with motion sensor; or (c) Residential Entrance Light	(a) Fully shielded fixture (luminaire); or, (b) Unshielded fixture (luminaire), 2000 lumens maximum with motion sensor; or, (c) Residential Entrance Light
Class III	Low pressure sodium	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Prohibited
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens or Below	Prohibited	2000 Lumens maximum
	Luminous Tube (e.g. neon)	Prohibited	Fully Shielded

Examples of lamps, 4050 lumens:

- Standard Incandescent: 200 watt
- Tungsten-Halogen (Quartz): 150 watt
- Mercury Vapor: 75 watt
- High Pressure Sodium: 50 watt
- Metal Halide: 50 watt
- Fluorescent: 40 watt

Examples of lamps, 2000 lumens:

- 100 watt Incandescent
- 26 watt Florescent

“Fully Shielded” denotes that outdoor light fixtures (luminaire) are to be shielded, focused, or constructed so that light rays project below a horizontal plane passing through the lowest light-emitting point of the fixture.

“Residential Entrance Light” is lighting that is required at exits doors per building & electric code requirements.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
OUTDOOR LIGHT CONTROL ORDINANCE
ZONE MAP
(NOT TO SCALE)

