

BEAUTY AND ORDER

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Landscape night lighting: Get the LED out

I have always been interested in lighting; even as a kid, not liking the overhead light in my bedroom, but preferring table top and floor lamps.



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I would move them around to different locations and see how they changed the look and feel of the room. It continued into college where my roommates likely questioned my testosterone levels with my concern for room lighting, including the type, location or even bulb wattage.

As an adult, I think dimmers may be the greatest invention of the century and have installed more than I should mention; both hard-wired and as remotes. The desire to have a visible light on in a room upon approach — in just the right spot — may be in my wife Robyn's top 10 list of things I do that annoy her.

With all that, my love for low-voltage landscape night lighting should come as no surprise. The soft look it gives to the property and landscape when coming in the drive, or sitting on the deck is a simple pleasure.

I catch myself at times waiting in anticipation for them to come on or staring at tree leaves shimmering from uplighting. Weird, I suppose, but I guess 'I yam what I yam.'

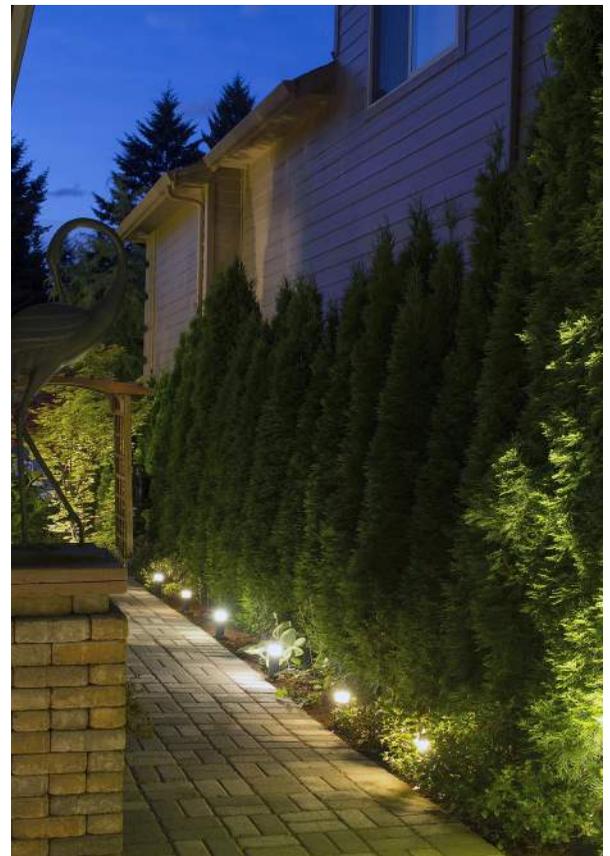
Night lighting has been an evolution for me, starting with cheap plastic lights and simple, low-wattage photocell transformers, to not as cheap

metal lights with slightly better transformers, to full-blown commercial duty fixtures with a stainless steel high-wattage transformer and all kinds of other bells and whistles. Yet this year, with the discovery of LED bulbs, it is a whole new awesome ballgame.

You see, by far my biggest beef with night lighting in the past was the continuous fight with blown incandescent bulbs from either their short life, or finicky intolerance of a thing called "voltage drop."

Invariably, this resulted in probably an average of about 25 percent of my lights being out on any given day; which seemed to be the threshold for motivation to replace them.

Second was the size of transformer and electricity draw needed for a relatively few number of fixtures. Well, thanks to LEDs, those days are over. I have now replaced nearly all of my 29 fixtures with LED bulbs that have a wide effective voltage range and 30,000 hour life expectancy! Combine that with nearly an 80 percent



Stock photo

We can help you with landscape night lighting like this.

drop in wattage use (5 watt LED equivalent to 30 watt incandescent) and my lighting habit is becoming painless and almost responsible. At least, that's what I tell Robyn.

If you have a lighting "problem" like me and need guidance with a new or existing system, we'd be happy to help.



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