

Facts About Mercury in CFLs

President's Report



William R. Dodds
President/CEO

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Ads and packaging materials for compact fluorescent lightbulbs (CFLs) proclaim that they use much less energy and last much longer than standard incandescent bulbs. However, if you read the fine print on the packaging or find the notice on the base of each bulb, you'll see that it contains mercury.

While that may raise an alarm in your mind, there's no need to worry. The amount of mercury inside the glass tubes of an average CFL is miniscule—about the equivalent of the tip of a ballpoint pen—and it's especially small when compared to other items you may have around your home. The amount of mercury in a CFL runs about 4-5 milligrams (mg), while a glass fever thermometer contains 500 mg, and an old-style thermostat could contain up to 3,000 mg.

CFLs are safe to handle and use in your home, and they release no mercury when in operation. Even if you break a CFL, the amount of mercury that may become airborne poses a very low risk of exposure, says ENERGY STAR. (To prevent breakage, carefully unpack a CFL, and always screw and unscrew the bulb by its base.) When CFLs burn out or break, the best course of action is to recycle them.



CFLs fall into the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) category of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), but there's no federal or state requirement that the bulbs be recycled. Some hardware stores and other retailers may have CFL recycling buckets on hand. And you may be able to dispose of CFLs during your community's annual hazardous waste collection event.

To find out if there's a facility or store near you that accepts CFLs, go to the Earth 911 website at www.earth911.org, or call 800-CLEANUP. Be sure to call the facility or store that's listed

before you make the trip, to ensure that it allows homeowners or apartment dwellers to drop off CFLs.

If one of these recycling options is not available to you, you may put burned out or broken CFLs with your regular trash—but in no case should you burn or incinerate them. Here's what EPA says about properly disposing of CFLs.

- **Burned-out CFLs:** Put the CFL in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.
- **Broken CFLs:** If you break a CFL in your home, open nearby windows to disperse any vapor that may escape, and carefully sweep up the glass shards. (Don't use your hands!) Wipe the area with a damp paper towel to remove glass fragments; don't use a vacuum cleaner. Put the fragments, the base of the bulb, and the paper towel in a sealed plastic bag, and place it with your regular trash.

CFLs are a great idea. They'll help you cut your utility bills, and they'll help reduce the need for electricity production. However, to create the maximum benefit for the environment, recycling burned-out and broken CFLs makes sense.

LED signs donated

Energy-efficient LED exit signs were given to the Illinois River Correctional Center in Canton and Dickson Mounds Museum in Lewistown Tuesday by representatives of Prairie Power and Spoon River Electric Cooperative.

The prison received 200 signs and the museum received 50.

It costs roughly \$35 per year to run an exit sign with an incandescent bulb that is on 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The LED signs given by Prairie Power and Spoon River each cost around \$1.75 per year to run, and the LED's also have significantly longer battery life.

"Increasing federal regulations are driving up energy costs, so it's important for our members to be as energy-efficient as possible," said Bill Dodds, President/CEO of Spoon River Electric Cooperative. "As publicly-supported institutions, the prison and Dickson Mounds are ideal candidates for this program."

Illinois River Correctional Center Warden Rick Birkey and Dickson Mounds Museum Director Dr. Michael Wiant both said they appreciate the signs, which will help the institutions save money for years to come.

"By utilizing the LED Exit Light Program, members can save considerable kWh's and dollars. We feel that the least expensive kWh's for our consumers/members are the ones that we don't have to generate. We see this program as a win/win/win for PPI, the distribution cooperative and the member," said Aaron Ridenour, Manager of Marketing and Economic Development for Prairie Power.

Prairie Power is a generation and transmission cooperative with ten distribution member cooperatives. Spoon River Electric Cooperative serves nearly 5,000 members in parts of Fulton, Knox, McDonough, Peoria and Schuyler counties.



New energy-efficient LED exit signs were delivered to Illinois River Correctional Center recently. Left to right are Spoon River Electric Cooperative Manager of Engineering Mark Balbinot, Illinois River Correctional Center Warden Rick Birkey, Prairie Power Manager of Marketing and Economic Development Aaron Ridenour and Illinois River Correctional Center Chief Engineer Todd Sharugo.

Dickson Mounds Museum received 50 energy-efficient LED exit signs recently from Prairie Power and Spoon River Electric Cooperative. Left to right are Prairie Power Manager of Marketing and Economic Development Aaron Ridenour, Dickson Mounds Museum Director Dr. Michael Wiant and Spoon River Electric Cooperative Manager of Engineering Mark Balbinot.



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Spoon River Electric Cooperative – By the Numbers

Miles of line energized: 1,249 • Number of members served: 4,944
Number of power poles in territory: 29,255

Coloring contest winners receive prizes

Winners of the Electrical Safety Month coloring contest sponsored by Spoon River Electric Cooperative, Bank of Farmington and the Canton Daily Ledger were awarded their prizes recently at the cooperative office. Winners are, left to right, Heuston Harkless, Austin Wright and Sarah Wheeler. In the back row are Spoon River Electric Cooperative Chief Financial Officer Martha Pritchard, left, and Bank of Farmington Vice President Chad Mayall.



Youth to Washington

Ben Neuendorf of Lewistown and Eve Shafer of Lewistown were sponsored by Spoon River Electric Cooperative for the "Youth to Washington" trip June 10-17. The two were part of a large group of Illinois students who spent the week sightseeing, meeting legislators and learning more about the federal government.



Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month

One of the easiest ways to make your home more energy efficient is to add insulation in the attic. To see if you need insulation, look across an uncovered attic floor. If the insulation is level with or below the floor joists, you probably need to add more.

Source: Energy Star



ATTENTION 2011-2012 SENIORS!

Spoon River Electric Cooperative is Awarding Two \$500 Scholarships to High School Seniors

High school students who are seniors during the 2011-2012 school year, and are the son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric member, are eligible to apply for a \$500 Scholastic Scholarship or a \$500 Honorary Scholarship, awarded by the cooperative at this year's Annual Meeting held on September 1, 2011.

Fill out the form at the bottom of the page and send to the cooperative before **August 22, 2011** to participate. Please see official rules and descriptions of scholarships below.

OFFICIAL RULES

- Applying students and their parent/legal guardian must be present at the Annual Meeting September 1, 2011, to win.
- Students must be a son or daughter of a Spoon River Electric Cooperative Member.
- Students must be a high school senior during the 2011-2012 school year and begin college undergraduate studies in the 2012-2013 school year.
- Students must plan on attending a two-year or four-year accredited college or university, including vocational/technical schools.
- Scholarship winners must be full-time students (at least 12 hours) during the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Scholarships are for one year and are non-renewable.

SCHOLASTIC SCHOLARSHIP

- The Scholastic Scholarship will be awarded based on an application detailing GPA, college entrance test scores, work and volunteer experience, participation in school and community activities, and a biographical statement.
- Five semi-finalists will be chosen from the scholastic application forms received.
- Semi-finalists will be notified by mail with a time and place for a personal interview.
- Those not chosen as semi-finalists for the Scholastic Scholarship will be automatically placed in the Honorary Scholarship drawing.

HONORARY SCHOLARSHIP

- The Honorary Scholarship will be awarded by a drawing as students are recognized at the Annual Meeting.
- All applicants are eligible for the Honorary Scholarship drawing except the Scholastic Scholarship winner.

	<h2>Scholarship Participation Request</h2>
Name of Student _____	Return To: Brenda Rothert Spoon River Electric Cooperative PO Box 340 Canton, IL 61520 647-2700
Address of Student _____	
Name of Parent/Guardian _____	
Telephone Number _____	
Scholarship Applying For: Scholastic* _____ Honorary _____	
<small>*Those applying for the Scholastic Scholarship will receive an additional form in the mail regarding scholastic achievement.</small>	