

June 24, 2024

Re: Invitation to Join the **Coalition to Reduce Light Pollution in Connecticut -
*A Special Initiative by Lights Out Connecticut and DarkSky International
Connecticut Chapter***

Lights Out Connecticut and DarkSky Connecticut Chapter have jointly proposed a new initiative to form the **Coalition to Reduce Light Pollution in Connecticut**. A website and online materials will be available shortly. Lights Out and DarkSky are seeking strategic partners for the coalition to provide sufficient impact with state officials regarding the environmental need to reduce light pollution.

Coalition Purpose and Goals:

- 1) Petition Connecticut Governor Lamont to Appoint a Light Pollution Control Advisory Task Force
- 2) Focus media attention on light pollution's adverse consequences to wildlife and human health, with emphasis on reducing the carbon footprint represented by light pollution.

Petition to the Governor: The central concept of the new coalition will be to transform the **5 Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting** from a privately-developed idea, approved jointly by the Illuminating Engineering Society and DarkSky, into official State of Connecticut public policy.

Five Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting



DarkSky



IES
Illuminating
Engineering Society

Responsible outdoor lighting is

1 Useful

Use light only if it is needed

All light should have a clear purpose. Consider how the use of light will impact the area, including wildlife and their habitats.



2 Targeted

Direct light so it falls only where it is needed

Use shielding and careful aiming to target the direction of the light beam so that it points downward and does not spill beyond where it is needed.



3 Low Level

Light should be no brighter than necessary

Use the lowest light level required. Be mindful of surface conditions, as some surfaces may reflect more light into the night sky than intended.



4 Controlled

Use light only when it is needed

Use controls such as timers or motion detectors to ensure that light is available when it is needed, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.



5 Warm-colored

Use warmer color lights where possible

Limit the amount of shorter wavelength (blue-violet) light to the least amount needed.



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After forming the new alliance, a top priority will be to develop support among alliance partners to submit a Petition to the Governor to form a **Governor's Task Force to Reduce Light Pollution**. The Petition will state two objectives that the Governor could assign the new Task Force, both of which have the aim of reducing the carbon footprint caused by light pollution: **1) Review the 5 Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting as developed by IES and DarkSky and make recommendations to the Governor as to whether or not these 5 Principles should be adopted by Connecticut as official state policy, to the fullest extent reasonably possible, by embedding them into the official policies and regulations of each Connecticut state agency** and **2) develop key recommendations for the Governor's consideration on outdoor lighting practices by select state agencies...**

A final report to the Governor by the task force might include, for example, a recommendation that the Governor task the Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) to undertake a study and report back to the Governor on the roadway safety and crash avoidance that can be achieved by deploying passive alternatives to street lighting, such as embedded reflectors to assist with lane delineation, side-of-road reflectors to serve as guidance for roadway curvature and the use of

metal glare barriers mounted above the concrete median dividers to block the glare from oncoming vehicle headlights. ConnDOT could also be assigned the task of including in the feasibility study a review of the practices of passive roadway lighting alternatives deployed by other state transportation agencies, including the practice of not lighting the Interstate highway except to provide a single streetlight at each entrance and exit ramp. ConnDOT's assignment might also include a feasibility study on when public safety might allow turning off existing streetlights from 11 PM until 5 AM to reduce energy waste during times of extremely low traffic volume, thus reducing a significant part the carbon footprint generated by street lighting that remains on all night long.

While ConnDOT's recommendations will directly apply to streetlights it controls, such as lighting on Interstate highways, the findings of the report by ConnDot could also be used by municipalities for local streetlights as well. A thorough ConnDOT review would include a finding that using utility poles as stanchions for attaching streetlights fails to meet the Recommended Practices of the proper minimum-to-maximum ratio of light-to-dark road surface areas illuminated by the streetlights. The Roadway Lighting Committee, which composes the Recommended Practices, states that where proper pole spacing is not achieved, it may be safer not to light the road at all.

Please consider joining us in this effort to reduce light pollution in Connecticut and to address light pollution as part of any climate change action plan.

Craig Repasz Co-Chair
Lights Out Connecticut

Leo Smith, Chair
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