

Statehouse switches to energy-efficient lightbulbs

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CONCORD — How many state officials does it take to change a light bulb?

State officials unveiled a new program on Wednesday to improve energy efficiency. Legislative leaders announced the incandescent light bulbs throughout the Statehouse will be replaced with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights. Some of the new lights have already been installed in several of the chandeliers on the first floor.

"By replacing over 1,000 inefficient incandescent light bulbs with ones that use 75 percent less energy, we are saving an estimated 113,000 kilowatt hours of electricity and over \$9,000 per year," said Sen. Bob Odell, R-Lempster. "More importantly, we will be setting an example for New Hampshire state government, businesses and citizens on the many benefits of using energy-efficient lighting technology."

The switch to energy-efficient light bulbs will come at no cost to the state.

The lighting replacement project was initiated by Rep. Suzanne Harvey, D-Nashua, who learned of Paradigm Nouveau Enterprises, LLC, a Colorado-based company that is donating the compact fluorescent light bulbs to the state as part of its New Light Project.

Federal Environmental Protection Agency New England Administrator Rob Varney said an idea as simple as changing light bulbs can save money and help protect the environment.

"I think people who were reluctant to do this are now believers," said Varney. "So much of what we can do are simple efforts like this."

Varney added that if everyone in New England switched to at least one energy-efficient light bulb in their home, it would prevent more than 600 million pounds of carbon monoxide from being released into the air from power plants, equating to the elimination of 60,000 greenhouse gas emitting cars from the roads.

Varney, a former commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Services, praised Gov. John Lynch for his initiative to cut state energy usage by 10 percent and for mandating that new state buildings and those going through renovations

"It shows Governor Lynch is active in promoting energy efficiency across the state," said Varney.

As part of the light bulb initiative, Lynch's environmental policy adviser, Alice Chamberlain, said 1,000 state employees have committed to using the more energy efficient lights in their homes.

"If every home in New Hampshire made this one change, our state would save enough energy to light all the households in Concord for 270 days and prevent 40 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions," Chamberlain added.