

Time to Make the Switch

Growing up in this area, there's one thing I remember about the month of November. No sooner were the candles blown out on the pumpkins and the Hallowe'en decorations put away, the first signs of Christmas lights could be seen, even though Christmas was well over a month away.

How many of you remember the old style Christmas lights that were wrapped around the trees in the yard or hung from the eaves troughs of homes in the neighbourhood? Many of them looked like this. {Take out Prop}

They were big, gave off a nice glow and they seemed to last forever.

But as the years go by, the strings of lights are taken out every Christmas.....eventually – what happens to them? They start to look like this. {Take out Prop}

I remember a couple of times, my Dad painted them with some old house paint he had lying around and eventually the neighbours were saying, Gee, I've never seen BEIGE Christmas lights before – where did you get them.

While all these memories are great and we'll cherish them forever, it's time to make a change.

With the rising cost of just about everything, the sagging economy and the growing interest in “green” energy and materials across the country, it's no wonder that LED Christmas lights are becoming more and more popular each year.

This year a number of cities and companies have boasted how “green” they were by switching to LED Christmas lights and I ask each of you here tonight....are you ready to make the switch or should u even bother?

The answer to both questions is YES.

While the new LED Christmas lights can be up to three times more expensive than regular Christmas bulbs, they use less electricity than regular bulbs. In fact, they use about 95 per cent less electricity.

If you had six strands of regular bulbs, running for 30 days for five hours a day would gobble up \$8.24 worth of electricity while the same number of LED lights would use \$1.37 worth of electricity. The LED lights use about 10 per cent of the electricity used by the regular Christmas bulbs.

The LED lights are more durable. They are encased in a hard plastic shell while the regular light bulbs can be crunched like a potato chip or the filament inside can be easily damaged.

If the LED lights are more durable, then there’s a good chance they will last longer than conventional Christmas bulbs. In fact, The LED lights are rated for 50,000-200,000 hours of use compared to the 1,500-2,000 hours for regular Christmas lights.

Aesthetically – the bulbs are different. The LED lights give off a softer glow than the regular Christmas bulbs but they are both bright. Some people believe the colours of the LED lights are richer than regular bulbs.

Because they use more electricity, the regular Christmas bulbs are quite hot...even the little mini lights can dry out a Christmas tree

while the LED lights are cool to the touch and when u consider 14 people die each year from Christmas tree fires, the LED lights have the potential to increase safety within the home.

I won't lie to you...the LED lights do have a few drawbacks. The wires connecting the lights and the light sockets themselves can be damaged just as regular Christmas lights can. The LED Christmas lights can't be replaced like regular bulbs can, however, when one bulb fails, you don't lose the entire strand. When a number of bulbs on a strand fail, you would have to replace the entire strand.

Here are some other points to consider...

- Because the LED lights are almost impossible to break, they are not sensitive to vibration or movement like the regular Christmas lights. The LED lights have no filaments to burn out or to get damaged if you drop on them or step on them.
- The LED lights are dimmable and programmable. They turn on quickly and don't require the use of a transformer. They just plug into a regular electrical outlet.
- The LED lights are also rust proof. They have zinc-coated contacts which are perfect for indoor or outdoor use. The colours don't fade or peel or crack like regular Christmas bulbs often do.

There is one final incentive for you to make the switch now. Home Depot is running a campaign to educate their customers on the advantages of using LED Christmas lights. Next Saturday and Sunday, bring your strands of regular Christmas lights to any Home Depot in Ontario, and you will receive a coupon good for 50 per cent off the purchase of up to 5 boxes of LED lights.

The old lights that each customer brings in will be sent to a recycling facility where they will be broken down and completely recycled.

And so, after listening to all the information I've provided to you here tonight, I hope you'll agree with me and you'll go out and replace your old Christmas lights with new and more efficient LED lights and your world will be full of beauty and colour all through the Christmas season.

Introduction for Al Gilday

Al Gilday has been a member of Rose City Toastmasters for a number of years.

He is currently working on his Advanced Communicator Bronze and he will be doing Speech #3 The Persuasive Approach from the Advanced Communication Series – Public Relations manual.

His Objectives are:

- To: Direct a personal appeal to the audience's self interest using a combination of facts and emotion in a speech delivered in a manner that appears extemporaneous.
- To: Persuade the audience to adopt a viewpoint using standard persuasive techniques.
- To: Use at least one visual aid to enhance the audience's understanding.

Time: 5 to 7 minutes

The Title of his Speech is: Is It Time for You to Make the Switch?

Please welcome Al Gilday