

ELS FACT SHEET

Why Businesses Should Not Retrofit to LEDs

It is a popular thing for businesses to retrofit to LED lighting these days. There is a promise of large energy savings, after all. But there is a danger involved in retrofitting to LEDs that many commercial customers do not consider when making the switch to LEDs.



The marketplace is flooded with lighting distributors and electrical contractors who advertise that they are experts in energy efficient lighting, trying to capture the market on LEDs. They call on their customers with a lighting catalog in hand, asserting that their LED lights save energy.

Herein lies the danger. These lighting distributors and electrical contractors are telling the truth that LEDs will indeed save energy and money—**but this is only a half-truth.**

Yes, LEDs by their mere design will save energy over their legacy light counterparts. On average, LEDs are able to deliver the same amount of light output with about 70% less energy. However, if the wrong LED is specified for a particular location, the new LED retrofit could have some unintended consequences that—in the end—will end up costing more money.

Here are four reasons why you should not retrofit to LEDs.

1. **Not all LEDs are designed for each application.** Just because you install an LED doesn't mean it is designed or appropriate for that location or fixture. The wrong LED in a fixture could lead to premature failure, costing more to maintain and replace.
2. **The LED you get may not be saving you as much as it should.** Most lighting distributors and electrical contractors only have access to a limited catalog of LEDs. This could mean that the LED they sell you might be consuming as much as 50% more energy than necessary as compared to the properly specified LED. And just because the LED has a high-profile brand name does NOT mean it is the best or most efficient LED. In most cases, it is exactly the opposite.
3. **Many LEDs are cheap and will not last.** There are hundreds of LED manufactures that use substandard components and offer warranties that are longer than they have been in business. The cheapest LED is usually not the best solution—nor is the most expensive one. Buying LEDs from a catalog can lead to spending as much as double the cost over time due to high failure rates.
4. **LEDs can make sales reps a lot of money.** Lighting distributors and electrical contractors who sell LEDs are motivated by one thing: the margin they make on the cost of the LEDs they sell. Their primary interest—in spite of their advertisements—is NOT to save you energy. Rather, they are interested in making a profit from your *desire* to save energy. This is a big difference.

SOLUTION: Rather than just switching to LEDs, consider hiring an energy service company with a proven track-record of helping businesses truly save the most energy and the most money with the appropriate LED lighting solutions. Why? Because just switching to LEDs won't accomplish your goal if saving energy and saving money is truly what you're after. Retrofitting to the correct LED for your unique setting is the only legitimate way to save the most energy and most money.