

Examples of Acceptable / Unacceptable Lighting Fixtures



Where can I get more information?

Main Office: Deschutes County Community Development
117 NW Lafayette Avenue, P.O. Box 6005
Bend, OR 97708-6005
Phone: (541) 388-6560
Email: planning@deschutes.org / Website: www.deschutes.org/cd
Counter Hours: M-F, 9am to 4pm



To request this information in an alternate format, please call (541) 388-6570 or send email to accessibility@deschutes.org.
Para solicitar esta información en un formato alternativo, llame al (541) 388-6570 o envíe un correo electrónico a accessibility@deschutes.org.



Outdoor Lighting

The purpose of the outdoor lighting regulations is to encourage the use of responsible lighting practices to provide safely lit areas for residents and visitors and to protect citizen health and safety and quality of life through the use of illumination that is energy efficient, prevents light pollution from light trespass, minimizes impact on wildlife and natural vistas, and recognizes Deschutes County's night sky as an economic and community natural resource.

What are the three main requirements?

1. Downcast

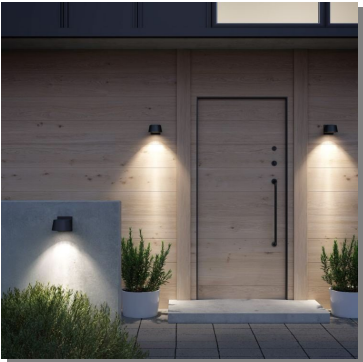
Light rays are directed downward toward the ground and include a fixture shield parallel with the level ground.

2. Fully shielded

Light rays are projected below the horizontal plane of a light fixture.

3. Light trespass is prohibited

Light rays may not illuminate areas beyond the property lines of the property on which the fixture is installed. Light trespass exists when a person is able to see direct illumination from an off-site light fixture. This does not include indirect reflection or scattering of light from mounting hardware or other surfaces.



What if I have an active farm?

Lighting for farm and forest practices as defined in ORS 30.930 are exempt from these regulations. For example, nighttime operations for seasonal harvesting would not be subject to the regulations. However, permanent installations such as buildings or structures must still conform to the requirements of this ordinance.

Can I use motion detector lights?

Yes, but they are still subject to the three main requirements listed above (downcast, fully shielded, and no light trespass) unless they are exempt.

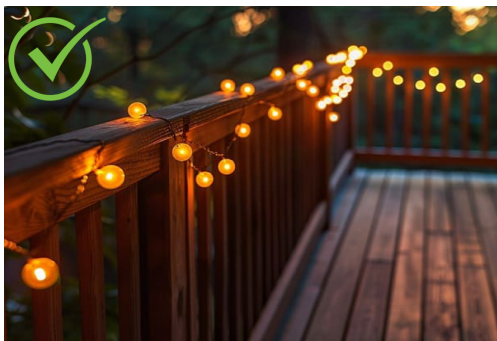
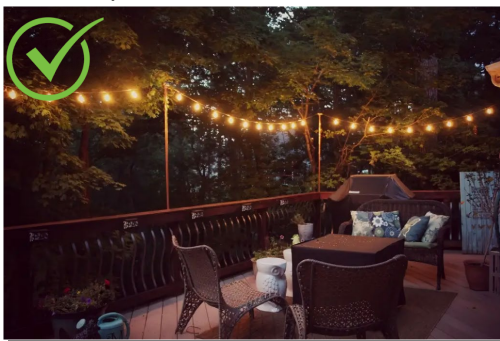
What about holiday lights?

Seasonal holiday lighting from the day after Thanksgiving to January 15 is exempt from the requirements of this chapter. Other event-specific lighting for no more than fourteen cumulative days in a single calendar year also is exempt.

How are string lights regulated?

The following standards apply to string lights:

- String lights shall not be used to solely illuminate or decorate landscaping features, walls, or fences.
- String lights cannot flash or flicker.
- Non Residential Uses: String lights **may be** installed in outdoor dining and entertainment areas only and shall not outline the edges of a building or for any other purpose. Lights must be extinguished by the end of normal business hours.
- Residential Uses: String lights **may be** used to outline the edges of patios, porches, decks and similar structures. Lighting must be extinguished by 11 p.m. These limitations do not apply to string lighting used as holiday lights (see above).



Do I have to change all of my outdoor light fixtures?

All replacement outdoor lighting fixtures installed on or after December 23, 2025 must comply with the outdoor lighting ordinance. All other fixtures must comply with the ordinance within three years, by December 23, 2028.

I think my neighbor is violating the outdoor lighting code.

What should I do?

If after reviewing the outdoor lighting regulations in DCC 15.10 you believe your neighbor is in violation, you may contact Code Enforcement to file a complaint at www.deschutes.org/cd

What types of lights are exempt from these regulations?

Certain types of outdoor lighting do not need to comply with the new regulations.

These include (please refer to Deschutes County Code Chapter 15.10 for the full list):

- Airport operations/aircraft navigational beacons
- Special events with temporary lighting for up to ten consecutive days
- U.S. flags displayed by top-mounted lighting on a 24-hour basis
- Internally lighted advertising signs
- Bottom mounted lights on externally lit advertising signs if those fixtures are specially shielded to minimize upward and side directed light
- TV or movie productions
- Construction lighting for an allowed use
- Sports or recreational facilities until 11:00 PM
- Publicly owned lighting, including streetlights, shall be fully shielded but are exempt from light trespass requirements
- Searchlights for public safety

Please refer to the next page for examples of acceptable lighting fixtures