

COMPARING LIGHT BULBS

The graphic below shows four light bulbs that produce the same amount of light. You might use bulbs like these as a bright overhead light. One bulb is an incandescent light bulb (IL), one is a halogen, one is a compact fluorescent light (CFL), and another is a light emitting diode (LED). Which one is the better bargain? Let's do the math and compare the four light bulbs using the residential cost of electricity at \$0.129/kWh.

- Determine how many bulbs you will need to produce 25,000 hours of light by dividing 25,000 by the number of hours each bulb produces light.
- Multiply the number of bulbs you will need to produce 25,000 hours of light by the price of each bulb. The cost of each bulb has been given to you in the chart below.
- Multiply the wattage of the bulbs (using the kW number given) by 25,000 hours to determine kilowatt-hours (kWh) consumed.
- Multiply the number of kilowatt-hours by the cost per kilowatt-hour to determine the cost of electricity to produce 25,000 hours of light.
- Add the cost of the bulbs plus the cost of electricity to determine the life cycle cost for each bulb. Which one is the better bargain?
- Compare the environmental impact of using each type of bulb. Multiply the total kWh consumption by the average amount of carbon dioxide produced by a power plant. This will give you the pounds of carbon dioxide produced over the life of each bulb. Which one has the least environmental impact?



All bulbs provide about 850 lumens of light.

COST OF BULB	INCANDESCENT BULB	HALOGEN	COMPACT FLUORESCENT (CFL)	LIGHT EMITTING DIODE (LED)
Life of bulb (how long it will light) Number of bulbs to get 25,000 hours	1,000 hours	3,000 hours	10,000 hours	25,000 hours
x Price per bulb	\$0.50	\$1.5	\$1.5	\$1.33
= Cost of bulbs for 25,000 hours of light				

COST OF ELECTRICITY	INCANDESCENT BULB	HALOGEN	COMPACT FLUORESCENT (CFL)	LIGHT EMITTING DIODE (LED)
Total hours	25,000 hours	25,000 hours	25,000 hours	25,000 hours
x Wattage	60 watts = 0.060 kW	43 watts = 0.043 kW	13 watts = 0.013 kW	12 watts = 0.012 kW
= Total kWh consumption				
x Price of electricity per kWh	\$0.129	\$0.129	\$0.129	\$0.129
= Cost of electricity				

LIFE CYCLE COST	INCANDESCENT BULB	HALOGEN	COMPACT FLUORESCENT (CFL)	LIGHT EMITTING DIODE (LED)
Cost of bulbs				
+ Cost of electricity				
= Life cycle cost				

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT	INCANDESCENT BULB	HALOGEN	COMPACT FLUORESCENT (CFL)	LIGHT EMITTING DIODE (LED)
Total kWh consumption				
x Pounds (lbs) of carbon dioxide per kWh	1.6 lb/kWh	1.6 lb/kWh	1.6 lb/kWh	1.6 lb/kWh
= Pounds of carbon dioxide produced				