

Subject: New Lighting Standards from Obama

Obama, Chu Roll Out New Lighting Rules and \$346M for Energy Efficient Buildings

By [GreenerBuildings Staff](#), GreenerBuildings

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- With Energy Secretary Steven Chu by his side, U.S. President Barack Obama detailed stricter new lighting standards and promised the swift release of \$346 million in [Recovery Act funds](#) to boost energy efficiency in new and existing commercial buildings and homes.

The president's move on Monday, coming on the first business day after the [House passed the climate bill](#), kept efforts to reduce U.S. energy consumption in the headlines.

"I know light bulbs may not seem sexy, but this simple action holds enormous promise because 7 percent of all the energy consumed in America is used to light our homes and businesses," Obama said of the new rules that set higher thresholds for energy efficiency in lamps and lighting equipment.

The [standards were issued](#) on Friday. Products made in the U.S. or imported for use in the country are required to meet the new parameters starting in 2012. According to the Department of Energy, the changes in lamps and lighting equipment would:

- Prevent the emission of as much as 594 million tons of carbon dioxide from 2012 through 2042, which is estimated as being roughly equivalent to removing 166 million cars from the road for a year.
- Save consumers \$1 billion to \$4 billion annually from 2012 through 2042.
- Save enough electricity from 2012 through 2042 to power every home in the U.S. for as many as 10 months.
- Eliminate the need for up to 7.3 gigawatts of new generating capacity by 2042, which the DOE says is equivalent to as many as 14 500MW coal-fired power plants.

The DOE's release of \$346 million in stimulus funds will go toward development and deployment of more energy smart buildings -- and the technology and equipment to support them.

In the U.S., commercial buildings and homes account for about 40 percent of the energy consumption -- more than any other economic sector -- and for a similar percentage of CO2 emissions in the country. Existing structures present a ripe target for energy efficiency efforts and retrofits, the DOE noted, with three-quarters of the 81 million buildings in stock having been constructed before 1979.

The Recovery Act money for energy efficient structures will be allotted in five major areas:

- Advanced Building Systems Research, \$100 million: Funding focuses on the development and design of integrated systems to control and manage the technology and equipment that enable structures to be more energy efficient. The goal is to accelerate progress toward zero-net energy buildings.
- Commercial Buildings Initiative, \$53.5 million: Funds are to be used for expanding and speeding formation of partnerships among major companies and organizations with large building portfolios to make that property deliver "exemplary energy performance." The DOE wants to increase the number of partnerships, now at 23, to about 75. Competitive applications for the partnerships will open in September.
- Buildings and Appliance Market Transformation, \$72.5 million: Funding will be aimed at spurring the development of more energy efficient products through an expansion of Energy Star; preparing and educating various industries on how to implement commercial building codes that call for a 30 percent improvement in energy efficiency and take effect in 2010; and adapting the DOE Appliance Standards program to better address innovative technology.
- Solid State Lighting Research and Development, \$50 million: The DOE's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy department calls [solid-state lighting](#) "a pivotal emerging technology that promises to fundamentally alter lighting in the future." The R&D funds in this area will be channeled toward work that will bring high-performance lighting technology and products to market more quickly.
- Residential Buildings Development and Deployment, \$70 million: The money is to be devoted to projects that will provide technical training and assistance to residential builders and the workforce handling improvement and retrofitting of existing homes for energy efficiency, as well as the construction of new, energy-saving homes. Eligible projects include those run by municipalities, states and utilities.