



July 2012

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Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition  
PO Box 1892  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002  
(928) 699-6665  
flagstaffdarks skies.org  
info@flagstaffdarks skies.org

## Flagstaff Has an Updated Lighting Code

by Chris Luginbuhl

Along with the comprehensive zoning code rewrite, the world-recognized Flagstaff lighting code was revised last November. Coalition members Steve Nelson, Wes Lockwood and Chris Luginbuhl participated with several other community members including a local lighting retailer and electrician as members of the citizens focus group that provided guidance for the revision. The only substantive change made, due to the unanimous opinion of the focus group (not just Coalition members!) was a substantial reduction in the amount of unshielded lighting permitted. For nonresidential lighting (i.e. commercial and industrial sites) all area lighting must now be 100% fully shielded. In residential lighting, any fixture containing a lamp over 1000 lumens (about a 60 W incandescent or 13 W compact fluorescent) must also be fully shielded. This is perhaps the tightest shielding requirement of any lighting code in the world, and recognizes the obtrusive nature of unshielded fixtures, particularly in residential environments.

Remember, due to Arizona law the lighting code cannot affect lighting that has already been installed on a site: unshielded lights over 1000 lm installed before November 2011 may remain. But the new code applies to all new lighting, including lighting replaced even on an already built nonconforming site. But a bad light is of benefit to no one, and some careful reasoning and persuasion may remove many eyesores in the night environment. The new code is available through our website, [flagstaffdarks skies.org](http://flagstaffdarks skies.org).

## Upcoming Events

### Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition at Science in the Park

Saturday, September 22, 2012  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Wheeler Park

### Light Wave Journey

Sunday, September 30, 2012  
6 – 7:30 p.m. Buffalo Park Parking Lot  
Night walk in Buffalo Park



Debra Luginbuhl stamping stars at Earth Day 2012. Photo by Lance Diskan.



Annular Solar Eclipse May 20, 2012  
Photo by Lance Diskan

## White Lights at Walmart

by Debra Luginbuhl

You may have noticed the white LED parking lot and building floodlighting at the new Walmart located on Lucky Lane and Huntington Drive - A startling contrast compared to the old Walmart in Woodlands Village. How does that fit in with Flagstaff's requirement for yellow (i.e. low-pressure sodium) area lighting? The short answer is that it no longer does: the updated lighting code (see related article) has closed a loophole through which this lighting was approved. The previous version of the lighting code had an exception to the low-pressure sodium rule for low-output fixtures, with the idea that it provided flexibility for a few odd lights here or there on the site. It was a surprise to everyone that a designer might illuminate an entire parking lot with such low output fixtures.

A local electrician also noted that the upward-directed floodlighting located under awnings on this site is contrary to the Flagstaff lighting code shielding standards; this is correct. In this case it was an inadvertent oversight of the plan and we have been assured the problem will not recur.

The Flagstaff lighting code is very strict in both shielding requirements and the use of low-pressure sodium (or now also amber LEDs) for most lighting. A particular benefit of this kind of lighting is that it has a much lower impact on sky glow than white lighting. The Coalition is pleased to see Flagstaff's continued commitment to the use of yellow lighting in the updated lighting code as well as roadway engineering lighting standards.



"Yes, I am a dreamer. For a dreamer is one who can find his way by moonlight, and see the dawn before the rest of the world."

-- Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

## Earth Day 2012

Photos by Lance Diskan



Earth Day Sign showing poor light (on the left) and properly shielded light on the right



Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition Booth



## Flagstaff: Tune-up Your Porch Lights!

by Debra Luginbuhl

Be an example of high-quality residential lighting at your own home: don't take the "I hardly ever turn it on" exception! A quality, fully shielded porch light fixture can cost as little as \$25! See the good fixtures available at The Lite Company and also at Home Depot.



Dark Sky Lights at Home Depot

See the difference on a home:



Old lighting



New Lighting

## Traveling Exhibit at the Flagstaff Visitor Center

The traveling exhibit will be at the Flagstaff Visitor Center until September 30.

This portable exhibit consists of three integrated banners that are designed to:

- Teach the basics of light pollution
- Celebrate Flagstaff's contribution to the dark skies movement
- Inspire viewers to appreciate the wonders of a starry night

Each freestanding banner is 83" tall and 32" wide.

The exhibit is available to any business, organization or group that wishes to help educate the public about light pollution and dark skies.

To arrange for FDSC to erect the exhibit in your indoor location, please contact us at [info@flagstaffdarkskies.org](mailto:info@flagstaffdarkskies.org) or 928-699-6665.





Marker Marshall, Miriam Robbins, Lance Diskan)  
Lance Diskan of FDSC presents check to Grand Canyon Association's  
Miriam Robbins to support fundraising for dark sky improvements at  
Grand Canyon National Park.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED