

Sustainable Luxury Can Start With Lighting

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Luxury hotels are finding that an energy-efficient lighting program with Pineapple Hospitality is a five-star amenity they can't afford to miss.

Most hotels find that energy costs run up to 6 percent of their total revenue, but luxury properties often find their energy costs can hit 10 percent or more.

Fortunately, a number of luxury hotels are finding that energy efficiency is actually an amenity for many socially responsible travelers. So taking steps to improve your efficiency not only helps cut down on energy costs, but it can improve overall guest satisfaction.

According to industry experts, lighting can account for up to 35 percent of a hotel's energy bill. And with the technological advances that have been made in recent years, lighting is one of the easiest places to find energy savings.

Installing Compact Fluorescent Lighting (CFLs) is growing more popular, as guests get used to those spiral-shaped bulbs. Modern motion sensors eliminate wasted energy without hassling guests. Skylights in lobbies and meeting rooms make use of natural light, and dimmer switches can cut down on the lighting intensity during daytime hours.

St. Charles, Mo.-based Pineapple Hospitality, the premier distributor of "Green" Hotel Products and Marketing Programs for the Hospitality Industry, offers a number of energy-efficient lighting solutions, including a range of CFL bulbs and Key-Card Energy Management Systems.

'Hotels used to say, 'We'll leave the lights on for you.' But with the eco-conscious travelers playing a growing role in the hospitality industry, it's almost better to tell guests, 'We'll turn the lights off for you,' says Ray Burger, President of Pineapple Hospitality. 'Luxury hotels are finding out that going green is a luxury to many guests.'

'That means a well-managed lighting program can provide high-quality guest satisfaction while at the same time executing environmental initiatives at luxury properties,' Burger adds.

Seaport Savings

According to Energy Star, a strategic approach to energy efficiency resulting in a 10-percent reduction in energy consumption at hotels would have the same financial effect as increasing the average daily room rate by \$0.62 in limited-service hotels and by \$1.35 in full-service hotels. Efficiency also improves the service of capital equipment, enhances guest comfort, and demonstrates a commitment to climate stewardship.

And energy-efficient lighting by itself can reduce electricity use up to 75 percent, according to the California Hotel & Lodging Association (CH&LA).

CFLs last up to 10 times as long as traditional incandescent light bulbs, thus saving light bulb replacement costs. Also, they produce less heat than traditional light bulbs, so they save money in cooling costs. Your guests will recognize these light bulbs and appreciate your dedication to their light quality and to the environment.

Some of the highest-rated hotels in the U.S. have found using CFLs from Pineapple saves significant money without compromising the lighting atmosphere provided guests. Adopting an energy-efficient lighting program from Pineapple Hospitality is one of the easiest things hoteliers can do to improve their bottom lines and properties' aesthetics.

'You constantly hear the eco-experts talk about 'low hanging fruit'; in every instance, lighting and CFL retrofits fall into that category,' says Matthew Moore, Director of Rooms & Environmental Programs for The Seaport Hotel in Boston. 'There are too many case studies out there that show energy-efficient lighting is directly related to overall energy efficiencies.'

'Our public space lighting retrofit, re-lamping of our guestrooms with CFLs, as well as a Lithonia upgrade have played prominent roles in our steps to become more energy efficient,' Moore adds.

Working in part with Pineapple Hospitality, the Seaport Hotel has installed energy-conserving CFLs in all of its guestrooms and public space fixtures. A total of 2,012 light fixtures were replaced throughout the hotel and its partner facility, The Seaport World Trade Center.

The Seaport also installed motion sensors in housekeeping linen closets, allowing the lighting system to shut off when no motion is detected for 30 seconds.

'People are amazed what can be done with energy-efficient lighting these days - that there doesn't have to be a quality compromise between incandescent and compact fluorescent lighting,' Moore says. 'Only small adjustments to the lighting scheme need to be made to obtain a happy medium. The energy efficiencies speak for themselves. Comparing 2004 with 2008, Seaport Hotel has saved 1.9 million kilowatt hours annually.'

Guests have been pleased with the lighting program implemented at Seaport. Known for its luxury, the hotel couldn't afford a lighting solution that cut back on quality.

'We listen to feedback from our guests, as they are very discerning. We don't compromise on luxury and luckily we don't need to,' Moore says. 'The technology in lighting has come a long way in recent years, making energy efficiency a smart business move that also has a tremendous environmental benefit.'

Four Seasons Conversion

Hotels considering a new lighting program might see the initial upgrade costs as daunting.

However, Marvin Dixon, Director of Engineering for the Four Seasons Philadelphia, has found that every lighting project undertaken has paid itself back in less than a year.

As part of its environmental initiatives, the luxury hotel has reduced overall energy consumption 20 percent since 2005. The hotel initiated a recycling and composting program that has reduced overall landfill waste 25 percent and converted more than 350,000 pounds of kitchen food waste to fertilizer. Dixon himself converted his pickup truck to run on the Four Seasons' used cooking oil, and personally loads up the compost and unloads it at a nearby farm at the end of each day.

As far as lighting goes, the Four Seasons converted all possible light bulbs in the hotel to CFLs.

'All of the comments we've received on our lighting have been positive,' says Dixon. 'In places where we've converted all 90-watt halogen bulbs with CFL reflectors - all over our planted areas and our pool area - it's brightened things up and guests have really liked that.'

Dixon has found that CFLs use less energy and run cooler so they cut down on the need for air conditioning, and hotels also save labor costs because the bulbs don't have to be changed as often. They do all this while still being conducive to the luxurious setting that Four Seasons guests expect.

'We have to be careful what kind of lighting we put in,' Dixon says. 'We've been putting in CFLs wherever it works without compromising the interior design of the hotel. Today guests expect you to take steps toward sustainability, but we don't want it to cheapen the look.'

'Our main lobby has a lot of marble, and in some places the new bulbs enhance the look of the corridors,' Dixon adds. 'It just has to be the right application. Pineapple Hospitality has a lot of options for us to choose from so that we maintain a consistent design in a luxury setting.'

Lighting Design Tips

The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers recently published a guide that targets hotels with design tips for energy savings, including lighting. Those tips include:

In interior corridors, lighting often runs 24 hours a day. This is an area for possible daylight savings from top lighting (skylights) and occupancy sensors that reduce lighting when the space is unoccupied.

Use compact fluorescent lighting in downlights, wall sconces, and table lamps. Use incandescent lighting sparingly, such as in accent lighting of artwork or highlighting of special architectural features in the lobby. Use translucent wall sconces and table lamps to better light the space and patrons' faces.

Use compact fluorescent fixtures with electronic ballasts in all plug-in table and floor lamps in guestrooms, lobbies and common areas.

Find out more at www.ashrae.org.

More Pineapple Products

Other energy-efficient options available from Pineapple Hospitality include:

Key-Card Management System

Hotel Key-Card Energy Management Systems allow guests to control the energy in their rooms through inserting their key cards. This assures that when guests are not in their rooms, energy will not be wasted on lights or appliances left on. Also, utilizing the key as the guests' source of electricity ensures that they will not lose their key, thus lowering replacement costs. The Key-Card Energy Management System is a sure-fire way to reduce energy costs, while still providing a quality experience for your guests. Key card systems can save up to \$105 per room per year.

Motion Sensor Nightlight

The WN-100 Motion Sensor Nightlight saves energy in guestroom bathrooms while providing comfort for travelers. Utilizing passive infrared (PIR) technology, the WN-100 detects occupancy and automatically turns lights off when the bathroom is vacant. As a convenience to hotel guests, a light-emitting diode (LED) provides constant illumination in the space and energy savings through reduced usage of overhead lighting. The WN-100 sensor replaces the standard wall switch in guest bathrooms. Terminal style wiring simplifies installation and Zero Crossing Circuitry protects the relay from the effects of inrush current and lengthens the sensor's life. Installers can select different time delays and automatic or manual-on functions to achieve greater savings or enhance operational convenience for guests. Featuring an impact-resistant lens with 300 square

feet of coverage, the sensor can withstand the threat of damage while providing accurate detection throughout the most-spacious guest bathroom. And because the sensor works like a standard wall switch-with the added benefit of automatically turning the lights off-it is easy for guests and housekeeping personnel to understand and use.

About Pineapple Hospitality

Headquartered in Saint Charles, Missouri, Pineapple Hospitality(TM) is an EPA ENERGY STAR(TM) partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines - including FreshStay(R) (www.freshstay.com), EcoRooms & EcoSuites (www.EcoRooms.com) Environmentally Sensitive Amenities(TM), EO(R), Neutrogena(R), Earth Perfect and greenSPA(TM) amenities, AVIVA and WAVE dispensers, Energy Efficient Lighting and Controls, Custom Linen & Towel Re-Use Programs, Green Key Cards, Green Earth Key Cards, Energy Management Systems and Controls, High Performance showerheads, the Nature's Mist(TM) deodorization system, Zero Odor, and dozens of other products and programs. For more information, please visit www.pineapplehospitality.net, or call us at 636-922-2285.

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