

## Selecting an Outdoor Lighting Company

Your investment in an exterior lighting system should only be made once. The following is a tip that will help you make an informed decision when selecting an exterior lighting company.

**6. LONG TERM VS. SHORT TERM COST.** In addition to the initial investment in your lighting system, energy efficiency and lamp life should also be considered.

### Energy Efficiency

The term “efficacy” is used to measure how efficient a lamp (bulb) is in converting electrical power to light. Simply put, high efficacy means a lamp is producing a lot of light without consuming a lot of power. This is important as energy costs accumulated over 20 years or more can represent a significant portion of the overall long term cost of your lighting system.

Halogen lamps used in low voltage lighting systems and some line (household) voltage systems are not very energy efficient as they typically have an efficacy of 15 or less. High Intensity Discharge (HID) lamps associated with line voltage systems have a much higher efficacy that often exceeds 60. A light source that holds promise is LED (light emitting diode). Although available today for landscape lighting, the light output is limited and not appropriate for larger scale garden lighting applications.

### Lamp Life

Lamp life is an important consideration as it will help determine how often your landscape system must be maintained. Halogen lamps have rated average lamp lives of about 3,000 hours with some lamps exceeding 6,000 hours. HID lamps have much longer rated average lamp lives of 10,000 – 20,000+ hours depending on the type of lamp selected. Lamp life is where LED shines (no pun intended), as lamp manufacturers are advertising 50,000+ hours of rated average lamp life. We are currently reviewing several promising LED products; it is only a matter of time before LED becomes a very popular option in our lighting designs.

Based on the above, it is important to ask your lighting designer about the long term cost to both operate and maintain the lighting system being proposed.

To view the complete list of 11 tips on Selecting an Outdoor Lighting Company and great photographs of exterior lighting projects, please visit our web site at [www.VernonDaniel.com](http://www.VernonDaniel.com).

About the Blogger:

Tom DeMuth is president of Vernon Daniel Associates Landscape Illumination. For over 40 years, Vernon Daniel Associates has specialized in the design and installation of custom landscape illumination systems for finer residences, commercial properties, and country clubs. To schedule a free initial lighting consultation, call 1-800-477-3210 or email [info@VernonDaniel.com](mailto:info@VernonDaniel.com).