

What You Need to Know

*About safe recycling
& disposing of CFL bulbs*



Just like batteries, telephones, TVs, computers and cell phones, CFLs need to be recycled. ComEd asks that you dispose of CFLs responsibly.

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CFLs save money and help the environment. ENERGY STAR® rated CFLs use up to 75 percent less electricity than incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer, preventing greenhouse gas emissions that lead to global climate change. Mercury is an essential component of CFLs and is what allows the bulb to be an efficient light source. No mercury is released when the bulbs are intact or in use. ComEd encourages all customers to properly dispose of burned out or broken CFLs.



Recycling is easy. Do not throw CFLs in the trash. Recycling services are available at participating Ace Hardware and The Home Depot stores, or visit www.earth911.org to find a CFL disposal facility near you.

If a bulb breaks: There is little danger from a single bulb breaking – the amount of mercury in a CFL is less than 5mg, roughly the size of a tip on a ballpoint pen. However, as a precaution, take the following steps to dispose of a broken CFL:

1. Open the window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
2. Do not use a vacuum cleaner – wear gloves and scoop the fragments with cardboard and place them in a puncture-proof, tightly sealed container such a glass jar. On carpet, use sticky tape to pick up small pieces and powder.
3. Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels.
4. Place all cleanup materials in the sealed container and bring them to a CFL recycling center. Wash your hands after the cleanup and disposal of the sealed container.

If you must vacuum, remove the vacuum bag after cleaning, put it in two sealed bags and place in the outdoor trash for normal disposal.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency, www.energystar.gov

For more information on CFL/mercury disposal, visit www.epa.gov/bulbrecycling.

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