

# Bulbs shine a light on changing industry

By Susan Skorupa, Reno Gazette-Journal

The biggest changes on home improvement and hardware store shelves for consumers in the past couple of years probably have shown up on the light bulb aisles.



And there's more change to come as the industry strives to improve energy-use standards and pricing on new light-bulb technology. There also are federal standards pending that – if enacted – will affect the sale of traditional incandescent bulbs.

Standard incandescent bulbs, the mainstay of the lighting industry for 100 years or so, are fading in popular usage and being replaced by more energy-efficient models. Some people bemoan the loss of the traditional bulb with its bright, golden light and cheap replacement costs. Proponents of new technology cite improvements to newer light sources – such as compact fluorescent lamps, or CFLs – with greater energy efficiency, longer usage lifetimes and falling prices.

“People are aware of them, and they are taking off,” John Lazarus of Bulbman in Reno said of energy-efficient light bulb choices. “Incandescent is 100-year-old technology. I tell people, would you want to go back to the old cars? ... I kind of miss my old '48 Buick, but I like my new one with all the new technology.”

Incandescents aren't going away entirely, lighting experts said. Some are being bolstered with high-energy efficiency. Some – such as appliance light bulbs – are not yet included in federal standards, but consumers should be aware that the lighting scene is changing continually with new models of

light bulbs and new technology adding to the choices.

“For us, it’s all about education and helping consumers find the right lighting options,” Alyssa Steele, a light bulb associate at the Home Depot, said of the wide array of light choices now available.

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