

Light Pollution and Dark Skies

Prepared by the Douglas UCC Creation Justice Team. Visit ducc-cjt.com/dark-sky to learn about lighting ordinances, updating lighting at home, citizen science, photographing stars, and more.

LIGHT POLLUTION = artificial light that is unwanted, excessive, or inappropriate.

- **Glare** = excessive light that interferes with vision
FYI, older eyes need more time to adapt to changes in light levels
- **Skyglow** = unnatural brightness of the night sky
FYI, we're interested in dark SKIES, not a dark Earth
- **Light Trespass** = light where it's not wanted
Like disturbing the peace with light instead of sound

EFFECTS of light pollution

- **Resources** - \$3 billion wasted + 4 million tons of greenhouse gasses
- **Health** - blue lights at night suppress melatonin; this is linked to increased cancer risk
AMA recommends bulb color ratings no higher than 3000 Kelvins.
- **Safety** - brighter lights and more lights can make things LESS safe. *Well-designed* lighting is safer

WHAT CAN WE DO?

1. [Improve outdoor lighting at home](#) - remove unnecessary lights, use shielded fixtures, and install low-wattage warm LED bulbs.
2. Pass a lighting ordinance.
3. Improve street lighting.
4. Add controls.
 - Timer - turn off lights late at night
 - Dimmer - full power only when busy and fully dark (not dawn, dusk, or low activity)
 - Motion-Sensor - off or low-light until motion is sensed
5. Participate in [Globe at Night](#), a citizen science project
6. Attract new visitors by becoming a place that is artistically lit at night.
Maybe replace street lights on the Blue Star bridge with colorful pedestrian lighting?

RESOURCES

- DarkSky - an international advocacy group - darksky.org
Major report: "[Artificial Light at Night: State of the Science 2025](#)"
- Light pollution map - lightpollutionmap.info
- *The End of Night*, by Paul Bogard - paul-bogard.com
- Headlands International Dark Sky Park, Mackinaw City - midarkskypark.org
- "The City Dark" – view the trailer or rent the video - archive.pov.org/citydark
- International Dark Sky Week - April 13-20, 2026 - idsw.darksky.org