



NEWS RELEASE

Release Date: November 26, 2008

Contact: Andrée Keneau, APR
616.355.1576

HBPW Makes a Green Choice for Lighting Up the Holidays

HOLLAND, MI -- The Holland Board of Public Works is recommending customers invest in ENERGY STAR(R)-rated LED (light emitting diode) festive holiday lights to safely and efficiently decorate their homes and businesses.

In fact, that's exactly what the Holland BPW is doing in some of its public spaces. The lights used for the approximately 18 foot tall Santa Claus and holiday greeting signage located on the side of the James De Young Plant on Pine Avenue; as well as the holiday display lighting on the HBPW's customer service and administrative building located on Hastings Avenue near 24th Street have all been replaced with LED lights.

"LEDs are not only a good choice for general lighting but for holiday decorating as well. Good for the environment, they use 75 percent less energy than standard holiday lights, last 25 times longer and produce virtually no heat," said Andrée Keneau, communications specialist for the Holland Board of Public Works. LED lighting uses plastic lenses (instead of glass), making them less likely to break and significantly cooler to the touch, and they can be used indoors and outdoors.

"A good number of this year's lights for the HBPW's annual lighting of Centennial Park have also been transitioned to LEDs," Keneau said.

The investment in LED lights cost the HBPW \$8,250.00. However, these lights will collectively save the community approximately \$5,800 in energy costs per year as compared to using traditional holiday lights. "Moreover, traditional incandescent bulbs have a lifespan of only 2,000 hours, while LED's are rated at 50,000 hours," Keneau added.

Whether you use LED or the traditional holiday lights, the Holland BPW offers the following safety tips for decorating a home or business.

-- Check for overhead power lines before installing outdoor lights. Make sure ladders, lights and people are at least 15 feet away from overhead power lines.

- If you have a metal Christmas tree, do not place stringed lights on it. Instead, use colored spot lights to accent and highlight the tree.
- Never use metal fasteners or insert nails, staples or tacks through any electrical wiring.
- Do not use light strands that have worn cords or broken plugs.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions on the number of light strings that can safely be linked together.
- When decorating outside, use only lights labeled for outdoor use.
- Make sure all lights and cords are UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approved.
- Turn off all holiday lights before going to bed or leaving home.
- Save energy by connecting your lights to a timer so they're only on during the hours you select.

The Holland Board of Public Works is a municipally owned utility, providing electricity, fiber optics, water filtration and wastewater treatment to the City of Holland and the surrounding communities.

#