



# County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services

## PRIVATE OUTDOOR LIGHTING REGULATIONS

### BUILDING DIVISION

The San Diego County Light Pollution Code regulates outdoor lighting with the intent to minimize light pollution in San Diego County and to protect against its detrimental effects on astronomical research at the Palomar and Mount Laguna observatories. **This handout is intended to provide a summary of the code and should be used as a general guide only.** Section 6322 of the County Zoning Ordinance, as well as Title 24 (State Energy Conservation regulations) may also apply. For additional information regarding these and other requirements, please contact the San Diego County Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical Coordinator.

The Ordinance classifies lighting requirements into three different categories:

- Class I: Commercial/Industrial Uses
- Class II: Parking and Security – All Uses
- Class III: Decorative – All Uses

The Ordinance identifies three different lighting zones within the County (see attached map):

- Zone A: The areas bounded by 15-mile radius from Laguna and Palomar mountains.
- Zone B: The unincorporated area of the County not included in Zone A
- Zone C: The unincorporated area of Julian and Borrego Community Planning Areas.

The following is an aid to determining allowable lighting for a specific Zone and Class:

CLASS	LAMP TYPE	ZONE A	ZONE B
Class I  Off 11pm to sunrise	Low Pressure Sodium Lamps/Narrow Spectrum Amber	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens or below	Fully Shielded (unless lighting is for commercial signs, then shielding is only required where feasible)	Fully Shielded (unless lighting is for commercial signs, then shielding is only required where feasible)
Class II	Low Pressure Sodium Lamps/Narrow Spectrum Amber	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Prohibited, except fully shielded HPS is allowed for private roadways (private driveways excluded)
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens and Below	(a) Fully shielded fixture (luminaire) with motion sensor; or (b) Unshielded fixture (luminaire), 2000 lumens maximum with motion sensor; or (c) Entrance Luminaire	(a) Fully shielded fixture (luminaire); or, (b) Unshielded fixture (luminaire), 2000 lumens maximum with motion sensor; or, (c) Entrance Luminaire
Class III  Off 11pm to sunrise	Low Pressure Sodium Lamps/Narrow Spectrum Amber	Fully Shielded	Fully Shielded
	Lamps, above 4050 Lumens	Prohibited	Prohibited
	Lamps, 4050 Lumens or Below	Prohibited	2000 Lumens maximum

Examples of lamps, 4050 lumens:

- Standard Incandescent: 200 watt
  - Tungsten-Halogen (Quartz): 150 watt
  - Mercury Vapor: 75 watt
  - High Pressure Sodium: 50 watt
  - Metal Halide: 50 watt
  - Fluorescent: 40 watt
  - LED: 50 watt
- always refer to mfg. specific lumen outputs.

Examples of lamps, 2000 lumens:

- 100 watt Incandescent
  - 26 watt Florescent
  - 20 watt LED
- These values are approximate, always refer to mfg. for specific lumen outputs.

**"Fully Shielded"** means a luminaire constructed in a manner such that all light emitted by the luminaire, either directly from the light source or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the luminaire, is projected below the horizontal plane, as determined by photometric test or certified by the manufacture.

**"Entrance Luminaire"** means an exterior luminaire mounted on a building required by the California Electrical Code or California Building Code to illuminate an outdoor entrance or exit

**"Narrow Spectrum Amber LED"** means a type of LED that appears amber in color, as it produces its peak spectral intensity within a narrow range of approximately 589 to 595 nanometers.

**SEC. 51.206 REQUIREMENTS FOR LIGHTING IN ZONE C**

Allowed lighting in Zone C shall meet the following standards:

(a) Shielding, Lumen, and Color Requirements

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>SHIELDING</b>	<b>Maximum light per site (50,000 lumens per gross acres)</b>	<b>COLOR</b>
Class I Color Rendition important	All luminaires shall be fully shielded	100% of the maximum allowed lumens per site	CCT 3,000K
			Low pressure sodium or narrow spectrum amber LED or another light source with the same limited spectrum
Class II Safety and Security	All luminaires > 1,000 lumens shall be fully shielded	100% of the maximum allowed lumens per site	CCT 3,000K
	Full shielding is not required for luminaires 1,000 lumens	Non-fully shielded lighting shall not exceed 10% of the maximum allowed lumens per site or 10% of the 5,000 minimum lumen allowance, whichever is greater	Low pressure sodium or narrow spectrum amber LED or another light source with the same limited spectrum
Class III Decorative/Aesthetic	All luminaires > 1,000 lumens shall be fully shielded	Irrespective of shielding state, lighting shall not exceed 20% of the maximum allowed lumens per site or 20% of the 5,000 minimum lumen allowance, whichever is greater	CCT 3,000K
	Full shielding is not required for luminaires 1,000 lumens		Low pressure sodium or narrow spectrum amber LED or another light source with the same limited spectrum
<p>1. A site may include one or more lots, as determined by the building official.</p> <p>2. The maximum allowed lumens per site shall be determined by multiplying the gross site acreage by 50,000 lumens (e.g., a 0.5-acre site * 50,000 lumens/acre = 25,000 maximum site lumens). The maximum site lumens is inclusive of all lighting classes. All sites shall be allowed a minimum of 5,000 maximum lumens, regardless of the size of the property.</p> <p>3. All lumens shall be based upon the initial lumen value of the light source.</p>			

- (b) Hours of Operation. All Class I and Class III lighting shall be extinguished two hours after sunset or within 30 minutes after the close of business, whichever is later, until one hour before sunrise, except:
- (1) On-premises signs shall be extinguished one hours after sunset until one hour before sunrise, unless the business is operating; and
  - (2) Off-premises signs shall be extinguished one hour after sunset until one hour before sunrise: and
  - (3) Outdoor illumination of a sales area, commercial areas, assembly area, repair area, or industrial area is allowed when the area is in use and the use is not prohibited by any permit issued by the County or by any law or regulation; and
  - (4) Recreation, sports court, and athletic field lighting, pursuant to the conditions of SEC.51.210

(c) Signage Requirements. All on-premises signs and off-premises signs shall comply with all the following provisions:

- (1) All signs shall have a luminance of less than or equal to 100 candelas per square meter (nits) between sunset and sunrise. For electronic signs, the luminance shall be measured under the conditions of a full-white display: and
- (2) The luminous/ illuminated surface area of an individual sign shall not exceed 200 square feet.

(d) Publicly Owned Lighting.

- (1) New installations of outdoor lighting on public properties and rights-of-way shall only be installed upon determination by the director of the responsible department that the lighting is necessary for the safety and welfare of the general public, and that the result can only be achieved through the provision of outdoor lighting and not through other passive means, such as reflectorized roadway paint or markers.
- (2) All new public lighting shall be regulated with adaptive controls such as the lighting of areas is restricted to times, places, or amounts required for safe occupancy or use.

(Added by Ord. No. 10691 (N.S.), effective 12-18-20)

#### **SEC. 51.207. SUBMISSION OF PLANS AND EVIDENCE OF COMPLIANCE.**

An applicant for any permit required by the County for work involving an outdoor luminaire, unless the work is exempt as provided in this chapter, shall submit evidence with the permit application that the proposed work will comply with this chapter. The submission shall contain the following:

- (a) A map or other drawing showing the location of the property where any outdoor luminaire will be installed.
- (b) Plans to indicate the location on the property where each type of outdoor luminaire will be installed, indicating the type of fixture.
- (c) The specifications for each outdoor luminaire to be installed, including but not limited to manufacturer specification sheets, photometric studies, and drawings.
- (d) To be considered complete, the plans and descriptions shall enable the plans examiner to readily determine whether the work will comply with the requirements of this chapter. If the plans examiner cannot determine from the applicant's submission whether the proposed work complies with this chapter, the examiner may reject the application or allow the applicant to submit additional information.

(Added by Ord. No. 9974 (N.S.), effective 4-3-09; amended by Ord. No. 10691 (N.S.), effective 12-18-20)

# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO OUTDOOR LIGHT CONTROL ORDINANCE ZONE MAP

(NOT TO SCALE)

