

# Dark Skies Standards Overview

520 E. Cascade Avenue | PO Box 39 - Sisters, Or 97759 | ph. (541) 549-6022 | [www.ci.sisters.or.us](http://www.ci.sisters.or.us)



## WHERE IS DARK SKIES LIGHTING REQUIRED?

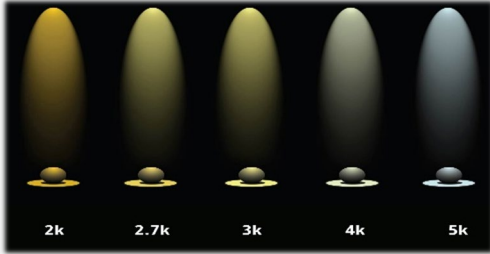
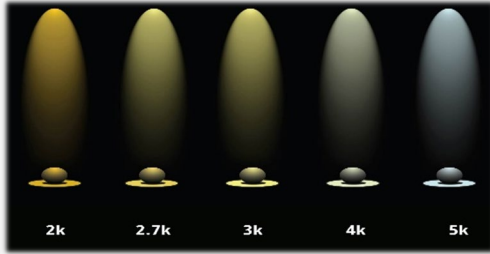
In all districts of Sisters city limits, all new lighting installed after February 10, 2024 is required to comply with the new Dark Skies Standards ([Chapter 2.15.2400](#)). Existing exterior lighting fixtures will need to be replaced with dark-skies friendly lighting by February 2029.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF DARK SKIES LIGHTING

- Useful. Only light if it is needed.
- Targeted. Only light the area where it is needed.
- Color. Use warmer colored lights, rather than cooler or blue-tinted lights.
- Controlled. Only light when needed.
- Low Level. Be no brighter than necessary.

## DARK SKIES STANDARDS OVERVIEW

Please use the reference chart below to learn how the new Dark Skies Standards apply to your property.

	RESIDENTIAL	NON-RESIDENTIAL
<b>Downcast &amp; Shielding</b>	Light is directed only down toward the ground. The fixture shield is parallel with the level ground as to prevent horizontal or vertical light trespass & glare.	Light is directed only down toward the ground. The fixture shield is parallel with the level ground as to prevent horizontal or vertical light trespass & glare.
<b>Brightness</b>	No individual light fixture may exceed 850 lumens.  The maximum lumens allowed per lot: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single family – 4,000 lumens</li> <li>• Single family w/ ADU – 6,000 lumens</li> <li>• Duplex – 6,000 lumens</li> <li>• Triplex – 8,000 lumens</li> <li>• Multifamily – 20,000 lumens per net acre</li> </ul>	No individual light fixture may exceed 15,000 lumens.  The maximum lumens allowed per lot: (25,000 lumens x initial net acre) + 2,000 lumens per additional net acre.  <i>Example for a 1.56 acre lot:</i> $(25,000 \times 1) + (2,000 \times .56) = 26,120$ lumens
<b>Color</b>	≤3,000 kelvins (neutral or warmer)  	≤3,000 kelvins (neutral or warmer)  
<b>Curfew</b>	No curfew or shut-off time.	All exterior lighting shall be extinguished by whichever time occurs later: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 p.m.</li> <li>• Within one (1) hour of the close of normal business hours.</li> <li>• At the conclusion of usual operations.</li> </ul>

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		<p>The use of such lighting may resume by whichever time occurs earlier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One (1) hour before sunrise (or</li> <li>• One (1) hour before opening of business</li> </ul> <p>Businesses whose normal operating hours are twenty-four (24) hours per day are exempt from curfew requirements.</p>
<b>Decorative Lighting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday lighting is allowed between November 1 and February 15.</li> <li>• Decorative low lumen lights are permitted only in residential districts.</li> <li>• Low lumen landscape lighting is permitted, but needs to be shielded as to prevent glare and light trespass. Light fixtures shall be mounted no more than three (3) feet above grade and used solely for landscape delineation rather than area lighting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holiday lighting is allowed between November 1 and February 15.</li> <li>• Decorative low lumen lighting is not allowed.</li> </ul>
<b>String Lights</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• String lights are allowed.</li> <li>• Flashing or flickering lights are not allowed.</li> <li>• Individual bulbs cannot exceed 50 lumens.</li> <li>• Color shall be neutral white or warmer (3000 kelvins or less).</li> <li>• String lights may be used to delineate or outline edges of patios, decks and similar structures.</li> <li>• String lights must be extinguished by 11pm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• String lights are allowed.</li> <li>• Flashing or flickering lights are not allowed.</li> <li>• Individual bulbs cannot exceed 50 lumens.</li> <li>• Color shall be neutral white or warmer (3000 kelvins or less).</li> <li>• String lights may be installed in outdoor dining and entertainment areas only.</li> <li>• String lights cannot be used to delineate or outline the edges of a building or for any other purpose.</li> <li>• String lighting must be completely extinguished by the end of normal business hours.</li> <li>• Permanent string lighting installations shall be subject to inclusion in the total lumen allowance calculation.</li> </ul>
<b>Lighting Plan</b>	Required at the time of Site Plan Review or building permit review.	Required at the time of Site Plan Review or building permit review.
<b>Deadline for compliance</b>	February 2029	February 2029

## WHAT IS A LIGHTING PLAN?

All applications for Site Plan Review and/or building permits must include lighting plans showing location, type, height, color temperature, lumen output and amount of all proposed and existing light fixtures, along with light fixture cut sheets from the manufacturer. Go to the next page to see the lighting plan form. You can fill it out and submit it to a City Planner with your building permit or land use application.

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## QUESTIONS

*Need help understanding the Dark Skies Standards? Contact a Sisters City Planner.*

Emelia Shoup, Associate Planner  
541-323-5216 | [eshoup@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:eshoup@ci.sisters.or.us)

*Have a complaint about someone else's exterior lighting? Contact the Sisters Code Compliance Officer.*

Jacob Smith, Code Compliance Officer  
(541) 323-5214 | [jsmith@ci.sisters.or.us](mailto:jsmith@ci.sisters.or.us)

Or, submit a complaint here: <https://www.ci.sisters.or.us/community-development/webform/code-compliance-complaint-form>