



# Harding Township Environmental Commission



## Outdoor Property Lighting in Harding Township

The Township of Harding has a lighting ordinance that was updated in 2011. The ordinance was designed to preserve our Township's character, including our view of the night sky, while providing for the security of people and property.

### Harding Township Lighting Ordinance

In order to create a framework for controlling lighting in the Township a lighting ordinance was enacted. It is made up of two sections the first outlines prohibited types of lighting, the second governs the hours of operation. They read as follows.

#### **§ 233-1 Lighting restrictions**

No lighting installed upon or designed to illuminate any building or structure, yard area or landscape feature, recreation court or recreation area in the Township shall produce so strong or dazzling a light or a reflection of so strong or dazzling a light beyond property lines as to constitute a nuisance to adjoining properties. Exterior lighting shall not be directed at adjoining properties and shall be hooded or shielded so that glare will not become a nuisance to adjoining properties or motorists. For purposes of this section, lighting shall constitute a nuisance if it exceeds 0.2 foot-candle at any point on a property line.

#### **§ 233-2 Hours of operation**

Hours of operation. Except as necessary for safety, security purposes or social functions, all exterior lighting shall be switched off at night after 11:00 p.m.

### The key to Outdoor Lighting: Be a good Neighbor.

All driveway, sidewalk and property lighting should be installed with the idea of being a 'good neighbor', with attempts to keep unnecessary direct light from shining out to abutting properties or streets.

As a lighting owner the best step you can take is to look at your property from the outside. The photo below shows an example where glare is the chief culprit, representing wasted and blinding light. This type of installation should be avoided. If it already exists consideration should be given to installing new shielded light fixtures with controls to turn them off when not in use.



Glare from poorly selected outdoor fixtures

### What are Glare and Sky Glow?

Detrimental effects of poor outdoor lighting include glare and sky glow.

#### **Glare**

Glare is the direct view of light source against dark background. Glare is commonly caused by poorly designed gate post lighting and exterior floodlighting. The cause of glare is poorly shielded lights that are aimed at least partially horizontally, not down onto the pavement.



Unshielded Lighting



Shielded Lighting

On the left is a picture of an unshielded floodlight. The glare is obvious and unavoidable, and happens even if the floodlight is tipped downwards. The picture on the right shows a shielded light in the same location. The shielded fixture provides full illumination of the driveway without the excess glare. Shielding of outdoor fixtures so that the light source is diffused by a frosted lens or globe, or is otherwise filtered, shielded, or screened is the key to eliminating unpleasant glare.

Shielded light fixtures are readily available at lighting stores or online and generally will fit any style or budget. A before and after example is shown here.



### Sky Glow

Sky Glow is a general brightening of the normally black night sky caused by artificial light pollution. Excessive sky glow can almost completely block out views of stars. The main causes are upward-directed light (again from poorly shielded fixtures) and too much light power used for the application.



Stars!



No Stars!

The left picture was taken during a blackout and demonstrates how the residential area might have looked before the general use of artificial lighting. The right picture shows the now-normal night sky, after the blackout. Light pollution has almost completely blocked out the any view of the stars.