

Cross Current



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A Bright Idea



This new technology is very illuminating, and supporters say the switch will soon be on.

I'm referring to the Pharox light bulb, a real bright spot in the push to replace conventional ones. The new bulb saves energy, brightens fully the moment it's turned on, gives off as much light as a traditional bulb and — best of all — it lasts 25 years!

There's a catch, of course. The Pharox costs almost \$50. Still, supporters say the new bulbs pay for themselves in just three years. After that, each one used cuts about \$14 from an average home's electricity bill. That saves money and reduces energy, all at the same time.

Unlike most of the low-energy bulbs now on the market, the Pharox lights can be used with dimmer switches and they contain no harmful

lead or mercury. They look like an old-fashioned light bulb, work well in freezing temperatures, and stay cool, even when on for hours.

According to lighting experts, the introduction of the new bulb couldn't come at a better time, mostly because consumers don't like the compact fluorescent variety that's now sold as a replacement for the traditional light bulb that was designed in 1901. Many people don't like the light they give off, they take too long to come on, and you can't dim them.

But the Pharox fixes all those problems. Inside each frosted glass bulb are six LEDs — light emitting diodes. Four are white and two are red. If left on continuously, a Pharox bulb would last 100,000 hours — about 50 years — but regular switching on and off reduces it's life by half. Though a bulb that lasts 25 years may sound like a dark development for lighting stores, boosters say retailers may be



*This Carpenter uses
wood and nails
to renovate the heart.*

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able to sell as many as 15 billion bulbs a year.

Despite competitors who want a piece of that action, the front-runner is Lemnis Lighting, the Dutch company that makes the Pharox. The firm was founded by Warner Phillips. He's the great grandson of Anton Phillips who started Phillips Electronics and brought the traditional light bulb to homes around the world early in the last century.

You might say spiritual illumination is also a bit of a family tradition, passed from Father, to Son, to followers. And if there's one thing God has made clear in recent decades, it's that the traditional ways of trying to improve our lives aren't very efficient or effective. The world is still a very dark place.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, science was seen as the saviour, the answer to all our ills and the antidote to faith and other delusions. Technology and materialism would make our lives better, bring us happiness, and connect us all in a community of comfort and significance. It didn't quite turn out that way.

Today, there's a growing recognition that what we need is the light of genuine love, a bright, long-lasting love that brings laughter and illumination to the most dismal corners of our hearts. Such a love can adjust its intensity to suit any situation, it's free of toxins such as jealousy and resentment, and it works in any environment, from the coldest apathy to the hottest anger. Through it all, true love emits the light of God's presence, power and provision. It refines and defines us. It sets us free and makes us true followers of Christ.

In its purest form, God's love lasts a lifetime — and beyond. It's only when we constantly switch it on and off that we drastically reduce love's effectiveness and its staying power. When we connect with the source, *"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable and keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."* (1 Cor. 13:4-7)

True love is pricey, of course. But it always pays off. When enough of us make the sacrifice, the world will finally see the Light.

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