

# The Weekly

## Information Resource Bulletin

### FOCUS: Incandescent bulbs

In April 2012, the government of Malawi, through the Electricity Supply of Malawi - ESCOM launched the free energy saver bulb distribution program. The aim was to reduce power outages and conserve electricity that was being wasted by the use of ordinary bulbs.

According to ESCOM's Public Relations officer, Kittie Chinseu, the organization distributed more than a million energy saver bulbs for free to households across the country. 700,000 more bulbs were distributed to selected retailers for sale to the public at a subsidized price of 500 Kwacha.

The use of the energy-saver bulbs, and other technologies, have a positive impact on global warming.

### The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- To learn from other listeners on the benefits they have experienced with using the energy-saver bulbs
- To understand the harmful effects of the incandescent bulbs to the environment
- To give journalists tips and guidance on their reporting on the use of incandescent bulbs and how they harm the environment

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### The Problem: Incandescent Bulbs are Bad for the Environment

The standard (Incandescent) light bulbs are an environmental hazard since they cause require large amounts of electricity. This means coal-powered electric plants create more carbon dioxide emissions – which causes global warming.

The additional energy usage of incandescent bulbs is also responsible for more mercury entering the environment than that is contained in an energy-saver bulb.

According to ESCOM, the biggest problem with an incandescent light is that it must produce a lot of heat to give off enough light to be functional.

More than 70 percent of the energy going into the standard bulb produces heat rather than light. The bulbs also give off carbon dioxide, which is harmful to the environment.

With energy-saver bulbs using less electricity, there is less demand on our power stations so less carbon dioxide is produced. The longer life of these bulbs also reduces space needed in landfills.

Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi Limited says it has sold more than a quarter million energy-saver bulbs. This suggests that more and more people are now realizing the importance of using these bulbs instead of the standard ones.

In an effort to save the environment from more harm, many countries around the world have banned Incandescent light bulbs.

For example, in 2009 the European Union began phasing in a ban on incandescent bulbs.

## Activities for Journalists

Use your radio station to help your community understand that incandescent bulbs are bad for the environment and that the energy-saver bulbs are the way to go, if they want to protect the environment.

Make the following points about the energy-saver bulbs:

The energy-saver light bulbs use up to 80% less electricity than standard (incandescent) bulbs, but are capable of producing the same amount of light. Using less energy to power your lights means that our homes produce less carbon dioxide emissions which are harmful to our environment and are one of the main causes of global warming and climate change.

Many energy saver bulbs will last up to ten times as long as a traditional bulb. An energy-saver bulb should last for as long as six months, while a standard bulb is likely to last for a month or so.

According to the Consumer Association of Malawi or CAMA, the energy-saver bulbs have a lot of benefits including:

Six energy saver bulbs in your home will use an equal amount of energy needed to light one incandescent light bulb. Another way to look at it is – the energy needed to light up a 100 watt ordinary bulb will light up six energy-saver bulbs.

When you use ordinary light bulbs your electricity bills are high and the cost of replacement is also high.

Energy saver bulbs have a warranty and a guarantee period – meaning you can get a free replacement if something goes wrong during the warranty period.

The bulbs are found in many shops, filling stations and at ESCOM offices.

Interview some people from your area who have electricity in their home. Are they using energy-efficient light bulbs? If so, why? If not, ask them why not.

If they use the energy-saver bulbs ask them if they can tell a difference between the incandescent bulb and the energy-saver bulb. Also ask them about the benefits of using the energy-saver bulbs. Has their electric bill decreased? Are they buying light bulbs less often now that they are using the energy-efficient ones?

Talk to Kitty Chinseu, Public Relations Officer for ESCOM and find out from her, why they encourage people to use the energy saver bulbs and the benefits these bulbs have on the environment.

### Useful Contacts

- ESCOM; contact person-Kitty Chinseu (+265) 1 822 000
- CAMA; Contact person- John Kapito (+265) 1 844 639
- [www.ehow.com/about\\_6556026\\_incandescent-light-bulbs-bad\\_.html#ixzz1ArW3KZLo](http://www.ehow.com/about_6556026_incandescent-light-bulbs-bad_.html#ixzz1ArW3KZLo)
- [www.conserve-energy-future.com/StopGlobalWarming.php#sthash.GTIFvYgn.dpuf](http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/StopGlobalWarming.php#sthash.GTIFvYgn.dpuf)



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