

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



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*Safe Handling of Compact Fluorescent  
Lamps or Bulbs (CFLs)*



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The new, or relatively new, **Compact Fluorescent Lamps or Bulbs** are a great new innovation in lighting technology, and by the observance of their widespread use, they are here to stay. They are more expensive to purchase than the traditional incandescent bulbs, but the energy savings will more than offset the front end cost.

The average rated life of **CFLs** is between 8 and 15 times more than incandescent. Incandescent lamps are manufactured to have a life span of between 750 and 1000 hours.

These bulbs are manufactured with a bit of powdered mercury, so proper disposal has to come into consideration. If a bulb is dropped, the glass shatters very easily, resulting in the amount of mercury in the bulb escaping. We should use precaution in the cleanup of the debris. According to the U.S.E.P.A. there were 270 million of the compact lamps sold in the U.S. in 2007. If all of these lamps were sent to landfills, the total would represent about .1% of mercury emissions nationwide.

Following are some rules or guidelines that we should follow for handling **CFLs**:

- **Open a window for 15 minutes** to allow for sufficient ventilation before starting the cleanup.
- **Do not handle broken pieces with your bare hands.** Wear protective gloves.
- **Dispose the pieces into a double layer plastic bag.** Use duct tape to pick up the smaller fragments.
- **Wipe the area clean after getting the small fragments with wet paper towels.** Place the towels in the bag with the broken pieces.
- **If you have a carpeted area where the bulb was broken,** vacuum the area as usual, but immediately after finishing, remove the canister or bag and dispose of it with the other bulb trash. Do not vacuum on hard floor surfaces.
- **Check with your waste management service** for directions on pick up of the bulb trash.

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*Excerpts: [www.wikipedia.org/CFLs](http://www.wikipedia.org/CFLs)  
Tupelo Daily Journal-Heloise*

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