

LED Grabs the Spotlight



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With how far lighting has come, it's easier than ever to do, contractors contend. Although Michael Kukol, president of [Horizon Landscape Co.](#) in Wyckoff, New Jersey, has fought the learning curves of past systems, today's energy-efficient light-emitting diode (LED) products are user-friendly. Many of the challenges his company faced early on—getting all the bulbs on the same candlepower, for instance—are a thing of the past.

"Getting the voltages and the lighting completely accurate was an early challenge," Kukol says. "But today LED has really simplified things. The earlier systems were rudimentary. Today's systems are much more advanced—and safer, too."

Yet lighting is more closely regulated than ever before. As a result, following protocol can be difficult.

"The challenge today is that towns are requiring permits to install lighting," Kukol says. "You have to be a licensed electrical contractor to install it, and it has to be inspected. The early systems were rudimentary, and yet they weren't inspected. Today's systems are more foolproof, but they're subject to inspection. In the end, it's more hoops to jump through."

Marty DeNinno, president of [Pinnacle Irrigation and Nightlighting](#) in Haddonfield, New Jersey, has observed this evolution of systems in the 30 years he has been installing landscape lighting. Like Kukol, he says LED lighting has simplified the process.

It is longer lasting and requires less upkeep, which some contractors see as a double-edged sword because ongoing maintenance work has taken a hit, DeNinno says. But like other business owners, he has adapted.

"Some might look at it as lost maintenance revenue, but we look at it as freeing up our time for new installations," DeNinno says. "A lot of times, those bulb changes were coming in at inconvenient times—such as a Friday

night or a time when we had other more profitable work to be done.”

Read more about landscape lighting here: [Bright Spots](#)