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# Recommended Practice for Lighting Industrial Facilities



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**Recommended Practice  
for  
Lighting Industrial Facilities**

Publication of this Recommended Practice  
has been approved by the IES.  
Suggestions for revisions  
should be directed to the IES.

Prepared by:  
The IES Industrial Lighting Committee

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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A well-designed lighting system can make an important contribution to the success of an industrial facility. The success of the well-lighted industrial environment can affect productivity, employee performance, safety, energy efficiency, maintenance costs, and the number of errors and lost-time accidents. Many features of a lighting system other than the quantity of light provided can make a significant contribution to the efficiency and safety of the industrial worker.

In the design of lighting for industrial environments, horizontal illuminance has commonly been the only consideration. However, many industrial tasks take place in planes with various orientations and in areas with overhead obstructions. Placement of the luminaires is critical to providing light of the proper quality, as well as quantity and direction, to allow fast, easy recognition of operations. These operations may be taking place at high speeds in areas of the production machinery or industrial products where ambient light cannot easily penetrate.

Selection of the luminaire and its photometric distribution can be important to rendering the visual task properly when that task is multidimensional rather than flat, and when the task occurs in a plane other than horizontal. The operation of the lighting system should be understood to ensure that the proper light sources are selected. Improper light source choice can result in difficult and potentially dangerous conditions caused by long warm-up periods or stroboscopic effects created where rotating parts are involved. The ability of the light to render colors accurately can have an effect on the recognition of colors, including safety colors, or product components. Many industrial operations take place in hostile environments, and the lighting products and hardware used in these locations should be designed and manufactured to survive in these conditions and be easy to maintain.

For these reasons, and many others, great care is required in order to provide an effective, efficient and readily maintainable lighting system for all industrial spaces, and to help modern industrial workers operate at the peak of their ability in a safe environment.

### 1.1 Purpose and Scope

The primary purpose of this standard is to serve as a guide and educational tool for the design of permanently installed lighting systems for industrial

facilities. This Recommended Practice deals entirely with lighting and does not give advice on the construction of a facility. The scope of this practice covers the design of new indoor and outdoor lighting systems for new industrial facilities as well as the redesign of lighting systems in existing industrial facilities. Recommendations are based on quality lighting practices, including: the safe movement of vehicles and people, enhancing the productivity and comfort of employees, conserving energy, and minimizing maintenance. Recommended minimum maintained lighting levels and maximum uniformity ratio guidelines are provided but are subject to variation for special circumstances when based upon sound engineering judgment.

This Practice does not include all information for mixed application areas such as parking lots, offices, outdoor environments, commercial facilities, or daylighting design. For these crossover applications, the associated Recommended Practice documents should be used in conjunction with this Practice to provide the lighting recommendations.

In short, this Recommended Practice will help the reader make intelligent choices to achieve the lighting goals with a minimum of expense of time and capital.

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## 2.0 LIGHTING THE INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT

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Providing a successful lighting design for a modern industrial facility is a complex task. In recent years, much more has been learned about lighting and its positive effects on the wellbeing of people. The goal of providing an efficient, reliable and easily maintainable lighting system, making use of all of the knowledge available to the designer today, is one that requires experience and considerable planning.

Industrial facilities include manufacturing areas, such as fabrication, assembly, sub-assembly, and finishing, as well as quality control, warehousing and logistics. Related areas can also be laboratories, pharmaceutical and/or chemical production facilities (including "clean rooms"), and vehicle maintenance and repair facilities.

### 2.1 General Design Considerations for Lighting Industrial Areas

The designer of an industrial lighting system should carefully consider all of the following design criteria,

which could be important in planning a successful industrial lighting installation. (These criteria are not necessarily arranged in order of importance, since priorities will vary for different industries or locations within an industrial complex.)

- Determine the *quality* of illumination for the manufacturing processes involved. (See **Section 3.0** in this document, as well as Section 4.7, Section 4.12, Table 4.1, and Section 12.5.5 in *The Lighting Handbook*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed.<sup>8</sup>)
- Determine the *quantity* of illumination for the manufacturing processes involved. (See **Section 4.0** and **Annex A**.)
- Determine the lighting required for *safety*, and ensure that quality, quantity and safety are properly weighted and addressed in the final design.
- Select listed or approved lighting equipment that will provide the requirements of quality and quantity, including photometric characteristics, as well as the mechanical performance required to meet installation and operating conditions.
- Arrange equipment so that it will be safe, easy and practical to maintain. Evaluate operating conditions that may create dangerous or unacceptable risks to people, facility, or equipment.
- Consider the energy as well as the economic and operating characteristics of the selected lighting system, and be sure that all factors have been properly weighted and balanced against the five considerations above before finally accepting the design.
- Consider the use of lighting controls for best energy conservation: the right *amount* of light, at the right *time*.

## 2.2 Code Compliance

Lighting system materials and installations shall comply with all applicable national, state or provincial and local codes, ordinances and laws.

For installations within the United States of America, the construction, application and installation of lighting equipment are required to comply with all applicable provisions of the latest edition of NFPA 70, *National Electrical Code*,<sup>1</sup> including, but not limited to, the following Articles, or to other editions

of this document which may be enforceable by the government agencies having jurisdiction at the time and place of installation:

- Article 215 Feeders
- Article 220 Branch Circuits, Feeders and service Calculations
- Article 250 Grounding and Bonding
- Article 410 Luminaires (Lighting Fixtures), Lampholders and Lamps
- Article 411 Lighting Systems Operating at 30 Volts or Less
- Articles 500 through 517 covering Hazardous Locations
- Article 700 Emergency Systems

Emergency lighting equipment, applications and installations are required to comply with the applicable provisions of NFPA 101, *Life Safety Code*, latest version; NFPA 110, *Standard for Emergency and Standby Power Systems*,<sup>2</sup> latest version; and NFPA 111, *Standard on Stored Electrical Energy Emergency and Standby Power Systems*;<sup>3</sup> or to other editions of these documents that may be enforceable by the government agencies having jurisdiction at the time and place of installation. Battery powered unit equipment emergency and exit lighting shall comply with UL 924 and, if necessary, other UL requirements.

Lighting systems in Canada<sup>4</sup> and Mexico<sup>5,6</sup> shall comply with all applicable codes, laws and ordinances in their respective locations.

## 2.3 The IES Lighting Handbook and Industrial Lighting Design Recommendations

Historically, the IES recommended illuminance criteria for specific applications or visual tasks. Such recommendations were often mistaken as the primary or even sole criterion for lighting design. Beginning with the publication of *The IESNA Lighting Handbook*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed.<sup>7</sup> and continuing with the 10<sup>th</sup> edition,<sup>8</sup> the approach has been to consider a wide range of lighting design criteria important for a high quality visual environment. In addition to illuminance, the lighting designer is also encouraged to consider the age range of the users of the space, whether the visual task is in a horizontal or vertical plane, or somewhere in between, and the importance of illuminance uniformity. The recommended horizontal and vertical illuminance values for a diverse group of industrial tasks, broken down by visual task, are provided in **Annex A**.