

The
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DC Complex Installs New Lighting In Garage to Reduce Crime Threat

By Kyle Leighton

Parking garages are the third most frequent place for crime in the U.S., studies show. Security professionals agree that parking garage design influences the level of crime significantly. The easiest way to deter criminal activity in preexisting structures is by installing bright, white lights, coupled with occupancy sensor controls.

In early summer 2011, Capitol Park Plaza in Washington, DC, began the initial stages of a major lighting overhaul at its parking garage for apartment tenants.

Lighting is the most visible form of security after dark, and good lighting is what helps make people feel safe when walking to their cars at night. According to Chris McGoe, a certified safety professional and founder of crimedocter.com, lighting in parking structures should allow a person to read building numbers and identify potential threats from 100 feet away.

Most parking garages use high-intensity-discharge (HID) light sources that operate continuously regardless of lighting needs. These facilities typically do not employ energy-saving control strategies, such as daylighting or time clock scheduling, and no considerations are made for lighting control

based on occupancy. Garage lighting, designed to only a single static level, wastes energy and contributes to peak demand during the day, while adding to light pollution in the evening.

By working directly with research partners and testing facilities, such as the California Lighting Technology Center (CLTC) at the University of California, Davis, EverLast Lighting has been able to bring an innovative lighting solution to the market.

Its step-dimming parking garage luminaires automatically reduce to 40% power on vacancy and increase to 100% power upon occupancy. The luminaire uses a fixture-integrated occupancy sensor. Bi-level

products may be combined with "smart" photocontrols to maximize energy savings, which is estimated to be 30% to 50% per fixture.

"[Using] bi-level lighting technologies for parking lots and parking structures is one of the most effective strategies for deep energy saving, as well as for the potential to enhance

safety and security," explained Michael Siminovitch, CLTC Director at UC Davis.

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"When we began evaluating the Capitol Park Plaza project," said Alex Orr, Regional Sales Manager at EverLast® Lighting, "we were able to quickly identify the needs of the customer, as there were outdated 8-foot linear fluorescent fixtures installed in the space before the renovations began."

John Corlette, Owner of JTC Electrical in Washington, DC, installed bi-level induction garage fixtures in the Capitol Park Plaza apartments parking structure to reduce energy consumption and improve security for tenants. The advanced lighting fixtures replaced one hundred 150-watt linear fluorescents with the company's 70-watt bi-level Davenport garage fixtures.

"We were able to provide an induction lighting solution that increased the level of security, while reducing energy. EverLast coupled adaptive bi-level controls to the 70-watt Davenport garage fixture. The bi-level switching gives the apartment tenants a better sense of security," Orr said. "As the facility is a tenant-owned space, it is important for them to feel safe."

"In terms of cost savings, Capitol Park Plaza saved nearly \$9,000 a year for this parking deck alone, and an estimated savings of more than \$100,000 over the life of the fixtures," Orr said.

Bi-level induction garage fixtures are considered ideal for applications that are vacant during parts of the night, yet security lighting is necessary. Bi-level fixtures dim to 40% power when an area is vacant and step back up to 100% upon occupancy. The "smart" bi-level technology integrated into the fixtures steps down the energy use in the parking structure to 40% when areas are vacant for a set length of time, allowing the Capitol Park Plaza facility to achieve more than 60% energy savings when compared with existing fixtures. Furthermore, safety in the garage is also expected to improve. When motion is detected

and the higher light mode is activated, the change in visual environment alerts occupants.

The previous linear fluorescent fixtures were installed in the 1960s, so they were very inefficient in terms of energy use and light output. The new bi-level induction fixtures have cut the complex's energy expenses by more than half and produce a much brighter looking light that provides a better sense of security for its apartment tenants.

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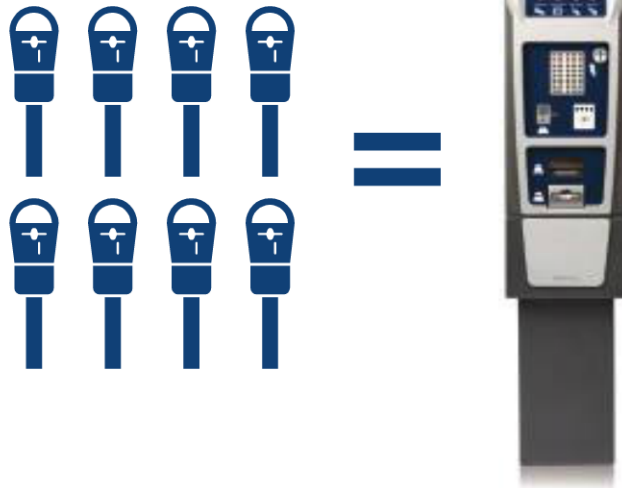
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