

# CFL Light Bulb Safety

Energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL) are becoming more common in homes and at work. In addition to using less electricity, they also have a positive impact on the global climate. Here are some important safety tips you should know about CFLs.



PURCHASE CFL LIGHT BULBS that have the listing label of a recognized testing laboratory. Light bulbs labeled by a recognized testing lab will ensure that the bulb meets the latest product safety standards.

## When a CFL Burns Out

- »» When a CFL bulb burns out it may smoke and the plastic base may blacken. This is normal and is not a fire safety issue.
- »» CFLs should never be discarded with household trash. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends that consumers use local recycling options for CFLs. Contact your local government or visit [epa.gov/cfl/cflrecycling](http://epa.gov/cfl/cflrecycling) to identify local recycling options.

## If a CFL Breaks

CFLs are made of glass and can break. Be careful when removing from packaging and installing or removing from a socket. If a CFL breaks:

- OPEN a window to allow the room to air out for 5–10 minutes.
- People and pets should LEAVE the room.
- TURN OFF forced air heating and/or air conditioning.
- COLLECT broken glass and visible powder using stiff cardboard, tape or a damp paper towel.
- PLACE the debris in a glass jar or a plastic bag in a safe location outside until you can dispose of it.
- CONTACT your local government to find out how to dispose of the debris
- CONTINUE airing out the room for several hours.

## NOTE

Consider checking the Consumer Product Safety Commission ([cpsc.gov](http://cpsc.gov)) for recalls of CFLs that may present a fire danger.

## FACT

CFL bulbs contain a small trace of **mercury** within the glass. When broken, mercury will immediately dissipate into the air. Concentrations of mercury will likely approach zero in an hour or so.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169