



## Proposal to amend the New Mexico Night Sky Protection Act (Chapter 74 Article 12) in 2025

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## Proposed modifications to NM Night Sky Protection Act

### Executive summary:

We propose to modify the existing Night Sky Protection Act in a small, but impactful, way: **we will require all new lighting to be shielded to the current standard recommended by DarkSky International** (at least 95% of the total light from a luminaire to be directed below an angle of 10 degrees from a horizontal plane, see diagram below), with a few common sense exceptions:

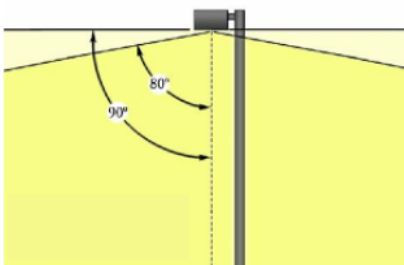
- we establish a partial exception for brighter lights near the ground that are illuminating upward: these must be directed at something and not at the sky
- We establish an exception for fainter lights near the ground
- we establish an exception for strings of small lights and temporary holiday lighting.
- we maintain an exemption for highway lighting signs
- we maintain an exemption for digital electronic billboards
- we add a total exemption for temporary lighting associated with film or television production, construction, or emergency services.

We remove exemptions:

- for new noncompliant lights that are turned off after 11:00.
- for new traditional advertising signs
- for new lights at farms, ranches, dairies, feedlots or industrial, mining or oil and gas facilities, but delay the implementation of the shielding requirement for these facilities until 2027, to allow implementations currently in progress to proceed without modification.

These exemptions are removed because responsible lighting can still ensure both safety and effectiveness.

**There are no requirements for modification of existing lights or their operation until they are replaced**



This diagram demonstrates the small revision to the shielding definition: light from fixtures will be required to fall in the darker yellow zone with only a minimal contribution in the lighter yellow zone. This prevents light from travelling large distances horizontally where it can scatter up into the sky. It also provides for greater safety by minimizing glare and saves energy and money.