

Light Pollution

We are all familiar with air, water, and land pollution, but did you know that light can also be a pollutant?

“Light pollution” is wasted energy in the form of artificial light going in all directions that impairs the ability to see the night sky. It’s not as simple as just turning off the lights or about getting rid of them. It’s about controlling light to make sure it’s going where we want it to go and not going beyond the intended target into areas where it shouldn’t be to begin with.

At Babcock Ranch, our community standards are modeled after the International Dark-Sky Association and similar guidelines to reduce light pollution – such as street lights with full shield cut-offs to prohibit light from shining upward, low intensity lighting, and other acceptable techniques. Greenways, conservation areas and undeveloped areas bordering these areas where there are unpaved trails will be unlit, or lit to the extent necessary for safety reasons only during periods of designated use for the protection of animals. Artificial lights disrupt our ecosystems. Nocturnal animals sleep during the day and are active at night. Light pollution radically alters their nighttime environment by turning night into day.



To minimize the harmful effects of light pollution, outdoor lighting should:

- Optimize visibility at night for what we want lit
- Minimize energy consumption
- Minimize impact on the environment and ourselves
- Minimize glare and light trespass

A Few of the Main Solutions to Reduce Light Pollution...

- Use lighting systems that use only the minimum intensity needed for the application
- Utilize smart controls or timers to keep lights off when they’re not needed
- Choose light fixtures that focus or direct the light directly to (only) where it’s needed – a common solution is the “*full cutoff*” lighting fixture which directs light downwards and prevents it from escaping upwards or outwards
- Choose the right type of lamp – some give off light waves that are more prone to cause glare depending on the conditions

Reference: International Dark-Sky Association <https://www.darksky.org/light-pollution/>