

CFL Test Lab

IIEE Foundation builds world-class CFL Testing Laboratory

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The IIEE Foundation has set-up a testing laboratory for compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) at the National Engineering Center (NEC) of the University of the Philippines.

Located in UP Diliman, Quezon City, this world-class facility was completed and subsequently commissioned on September 14, with funding from the IIEE and generous contributions from suppliers and contractors.

The laboratory is fully automated and can simultaneously accommodate 216 models of CFLs. The testing of any CFL model can be started any day and any time since the testing of each model is programmed separately from the other models.

The IIEE foundation (implementing arm designated by the IIEE) and the UP-NEC linked up for this project, upon the encouragement of the Department of Energy (DOE), the Bureau of Product Standards (BPS) and the Philippine Lighting Industry Association (PLIA). The IIEEF will operate the facility while the UP-NEC will undertake the R & D work relevant to the testing of CFLs.

Although the construction took only four months, the whole project was really two years in the making, including several meetings with the DOE, BPS, PLIA and UP-NEC.

Why a Testing Lab for CFLs

CFLs have been around in the local market for a few years now and the biggest barrier to their widespread use is the lack of quality assurance. To date, it has been the buyer's lookout to select which among the numerous brands and models will give him value for his money. A sad but common experience is the premature lamp failure; this builds up market resistance to this cost-effective lighting product which has a high impact on reducing energy consumption.

With the urgent need to conserve energy, it has therefore become necessary to verify the CFL manufacturer's claims on safety, light output, and lamp life. Requiring lamp models to pass the quality standards of this test lab and certifying manufacturers claims would protect the public from sub-standard products. Moreover, with a certification of quality from the lab, the use of CFLs may become more widespread and greater savings in energy achieved as the energy-guzzling incandescent lamps are replaced by these CFLs. Moreover, sub-standard models will be prevented from reaching the market as well.

Replacing your incandescent lamps with certified CFLs would go along way towards bringing down your cost of electricity and averting the looming power shortfall (by 2010).

The IIEE Foundation found willing and able partners in the industry when it embarked on setting up a world-class CFL Testing Laboratory with a very limited budget.

The CFL Test Lab which aims to promote energy efficiency nationwide, thereby contribute towards mitigating Global Warming, provided several generous corporate donors with a concrete way of exercising corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Generous support in the form of discounts and/or concessional prices topped with easy terms of payment and even outright donations poured in from various firms in the industry, namely: Steel Centre, Fumaco, Koton Philippines, Asiaphil, Starbright Sales Enterprises, Inc., RPV Electro Technology Phils., Inc., PID (Siemens Automation), Kruger Philippines, Columbia Wire and Cable Corp., Enerthrust Incorporated, Max Steel, FV Mapile & Associates, 3M Philippines, and Manila Electric Company.

IEE Foundation's partners in this project have shown that companies can still perform credibly and professionally if they have the foresight to see foregone profits as an investment for the future and their contribution to a worthy cause. In addition, these have also demonstrated that the lack of money is not the problem when undertaking projects that promote worthy causes, but the selection of the right partners is critical and IIEEF has chosen the right ones. Of course, it helped that the project proponent, the IIEE Foundation, is a non-profit organization to start with. That is not to say, however, that no profits would come from this project. On the contrary, all involved in this project as much as the intended beneficiaries of this project (i.e. all users of lighting products in the country), stand to gain by having only quality energy-efficient lighting products on the market.