



**CITY OF BRISBANE**  
Community Development Department  
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## **CITY OF BRISBANE OUTDOOR LIGHTING REGULATIONS: COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES**

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This handout breaks down the basics of Ordinance 687 (BMC Chapter 15.88). Contact the Community Development Department with questions or for more information.

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### **EFFECTIVE DATES:**

- Starting **March 1, 2024**, if you are replacing or installing **new outdoor lighting** (including illuminated signs) on your property you will need to make sure that the bulbs and fixtures comply with new regulations that control the brightness, color, and other characteristics of outdoor lighting.
- By **March 1, 2025**, **existing lighting** shall be modified where feasible: directing light downward if possible, adjusting dimmers and motion timers to comply where lighting is equipped with them, and replacing bulbs to meet color and lumen thresholds when they are replaceable.
- By **March 1, 2029**, all existing lighting at **commercial** properties shall be brought into compliance.

### **IS MY LIGHTNING EXEMPT FROM REGULATIONS? Exempt lighting includes:**

1. *Indoor lighting.* The new regulations do not affect indoor lighting. You will still need a building permit to install new indoor lighting involving new electrical work.
2. *Temporary construction or emergency lighting.* Temporary construction lighting may only be operated within the hours set forth in Chapter 8.28 of the BMC. Emergency lighting is lighting that is temporary, necessary, and is discontinued immediately upon completion of the construction work or termination of the emergency; provided, however, construction or emergency lighting shall be deployed to comply with the ordinance to the greatest practical extent.
3. *Address identification lighting that complies with the Building Code.*
4. *Low-intensity landscape lighting*, including landscape lighting that emits no more than 300 lumens per fixture, or 100 lumens per fixture for dynamic lighting. Lighting must be pointed downward.
5. *Combustible fuel lighting*, including fire pits, lanterns, or torches when used temporarily in occupied areas.

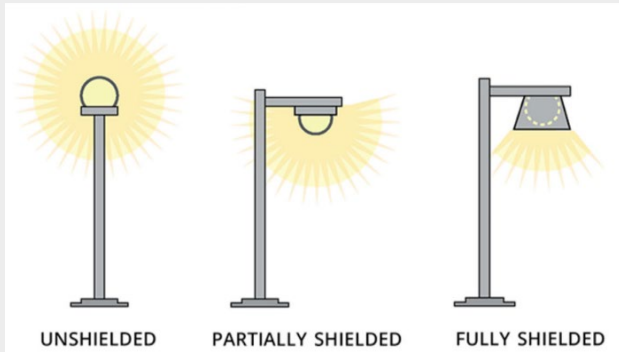
### **WHAT ABOUT BRISBANE STARS AND SEASONAL/HOLIDAY LIGHTING?**

Brisbane Stars are allowed year-round, while other seasonal/holiday lighting may only be illuminated September 15 to January 31. Both are subject to curfew but are not required to comply with other ordinance requirements.

**LIGHTING STANDARDS:** Non-exempt new outdoor lighting must comply with the following standards:

**SHIELDING**

All outdoor lighting must be fully shielded; that is, the bulb or light source must be shielded by an opaque covering.



Shielding exemptions:

- String lights (max. 300 lumens per string) when used in occupied decks or patios.
- Dynamic lights (max. 100 lumens per fixture) when used in occupied decks or patios.
- Seasonal lighting.
- US or CA flag lighting (partial shielding required).
- Illuminated advertising signage.

**LIGHTING LOCATION**

Lighting at the property line **except for advertising signage** must be controlled by motion sensor that extinguishes lights 10 minutes or less after activation.

**LIGHT TRESPASS**

Unless exempt from the ordinance or from the shielding requirements in the ordinance, no light source (e.g., light bulb) may be directly visible from off-site.

**CURFEW**

Commercial: 10 PM or close of business, whichever is later. Advertising signs included.

Automated control systems (photocells, motion sensors, timers, etc.) must be used.

Curfew exemptions:

- Lighting activated by motion sensor which extinguishes 10 minutes after activation
- Lighting at building entrances, property lines, and driveways

**LIGHTING COLOR**

The correlated color temperature (CCT) of outdoor lights must be 3,000 Kelvin or less.

Light color exemptions: Seasonal lighting, advertising signs.

**SEASONAL LIGHTING**

Seasonal lighting may only be illuminated September 15 to January 31 and must comply with curfew requirements.

## MAXIMUM ILLUMINATION BY ZONING DISTRICT

The ordinance establishes maximum illumination levels for residential properties, shown in the table below. **You will need to submit a sitewide lighting inventory with any building permit to install new outdoor lighting fixtures.**

Zoning District	Maximum lumens per SF of hardscape	Maximum lumens per SF of developed lot area
NCRO-2		1.75
NCRO-1, SCRO-1, SP-CRO, HC, M-1, TC-1, TC-2, C/PU	3.5	
All other zoning districts and uses not named	Determined at time of application or closest applicable district as determined by the Community Development Director	

The ordinance defines “hardscape” as permanent hardscape improvements, including but not limited to parking lots, decks and patios, docks and piers, drives, entrances, curbs, ramps, stairs, steps, medians, walkways, and non-vegetated landscaping that is 10 feet or less in width. Materials may include but are not limited to concrete, asphalt, stone, gravel, or wood timbers. Hardscaping does not include the footprint of buildings.

“Developed lot area” is defined as the portion of a lot that is covered or occupied by structures and includes any finished surface, such as a slab or deck, which is covered by a roof or other solid covering with at least seven (7) feet of clearance, other than an eave or overhang, and includes also cantilevered bays and other enclosed architectural projections which contain floor or seating area.

## BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

You must submit a building permit application to install new outdoor lighting fixtures. Check out the building permit application checklists on the City’s webpage for more information on what to submit:

[Building Handouts and Forms | City of Brisbane, CA \(brisbaneca.org\)](https://www.brisbaneca.org/building-handouts-and-forms)

## WHAT IF I CAN’T COMPLY?

You may request a deviation from the outdoor lighting standards if there are unique circumstances affecting your property or unique design and land use characteristics that make it infeasible or impractical to comply with the standards. You can submit a planning application for an outdoor lighting deviation on the City’s website at [www.brisbaneca.org/planningapplication](https://www.brisbaneca.org/planningapplication).