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Switch to LEDs and plant a forest three times the size of Great Britain

By using efficient lighting such as LEDs 650 million tons of CO₂ could be saved globally

650 million tons of CO₂ could be saved by using energy efficient products such as light emitting diodes (LEDs) – the equivalent to planting a new forest nearly three times the size of Great Britain. According to the Lighting Industry Federation, 75 percent of UK buildings still use lighting technology that is over 25 years old. As OSRAM CEO Martin Goetzeler proclaimed: “There is huge potential with energy efficient lighting. LEDs offer a particularly small size, a long lifetime and top levels of energy-efficiency and are suitable for a growing number of lighting applications and markets.” Due to the growing demand in TV backlighting and general lighting, market researchers are forecasting a threefold increase up to almost 13 billion Euros by 2012 for LEDs. Mr Goetzeler continued: “66 percent of OSRAM sales come from energy-efficient products, which will increase up to 80 percent within the next few years. 18 percent of our sales come from new technologies such as LEDs and OLEDs and this will only rise in the future.”

A recent study conducted by OSRAM reveals that the latest light-emitting diodes are just as environmentally-friendly as energy-saving light bulbs, and are streets ahead of conventional bulbs in terms of their ecological impact. The latest generation of OSRAM LED light bulbs achieves a lifetime of 25,000 hours with a power input of 8 watts. 25 conventional 40-watt light bulbs would be needed to achieve the same burning life, each with an average lifetime of 1,000. “There is a strong need in the UK for innovative, quality and energy efficient products. We are a preferred supplier, thanks to our integrated LED portfolio of products, systems and solutions,” said Rune Marki, head of OSRAM UK.

LEDs are already well established in market segments such as backlighting for mobile phones and monitors, as well as in the automotive sector. Significantly LCD TV backlighting is growing quickly. In the residential market, the rising demand for efficient classic shape retrofit light bulbs means that LEDs are on the verge of a breakthrough. Professional applications like architectural lighting, tunnels and street lighting are also on the way. In the medium term, commercial applications (shop and office lighting) will be the largest segment. Growth will be driven by falling prices, further technical developments and global political efforts to ban inefficient bulbs. Customers will be able to choose from established technologies such as halogen and energy-saving light bulbs alongside LEDs for many years to come.

Martin Goetzeler went on to explain: "The combination of technical know-how and market access will be decisive for manufacturers if they are to secure long-term success. We are already investing close to 50 percent of our research and development expenditure in LED and OLED." He added that OSRAM is strengthening its prominent position in all stages of the LED value chain and that the company is at the same time continuing to lead in classic lighting business with traditional energy-saving products.

OSRAM sees the next development step in the lighting market in the field of organic LEDs. OLEDs are flat light sources that use organic semiconductors to generate light. They have the potential to produce the same quality of white light as incandescent bulbs but with power efficiencies considerably better than even fluorescent lighting. Martin Lupton; President of the Professional Lighting Designers Association explains "The UK is a world leader in lighting design. The potential that this technology unlocks, both creatively and environmentally, is very exciting." He adds "imagine a space literally made of light - the floor, walls, ceiling and even the windows. The design possibilities are endless; it would be science fiction come true."

OSRAM is part of the Industry Sector of Siemens and one of the two leading lighting manufacturers in the world. Sales for OSRAM worldwide totalled to €4.0 billion in fiscal year 2009, 88 percent of which came from outside Germany. OSRAM is a high-tech company in the lighting industry. Over 66 percent of sales come from energy-efficient products. This global player employs more than 39,000 people worldwide, supplies customers in some 150 countries and has 46 production facilities in 17 countries (September 30). www.osram.com

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