

# ASK THE PROS

*Experts shed light on illuminating your home*

## How are designers using LED lighting effectively?

For ambient lighting, many designers begin a conversion into LED lighting products by retrofitting existing recessed fixtures. In addition to the low electrical consumption and long life (40,000 hours on average), LED lighting technology has finally evolved with many color temperature options to choose from and the all-important dimming capability.

For accent lighting, one of the most versatile and popular LED products on the market for designers is LED tape light. It is sold in single foot sections and in many cases is dimmable. The delicate scale, flexibility and longevity of this product make it perfect for accentuating architectural detailing; it is also available for exterior applications.

*Susan Nottoli, Dulles Electric Supply Corporation*

## How can the right lighting create drama in a space?

Lighting can add drama to an interior or exterior space by producing intensities of light that vary from one part of the space to another. One can visually alter a space with proper lighting techniques, making small spaces appear larger and larger spaces appear more intimate; highlighting works of art, textures and furnishings; and creating more interesting and exciting visual environments. Even rooms with no architectural detail can appear more interesting with



**A room with a lighting plan by Palindrome Lighting Design, Inc.**

layers of light that illuminate some areas while leaving others in shadows.

*Ronna Cohen, FIFDA, ASID Industry Partner, Annapolis Lighting*

## What are some common mistakes consumers make when lighting their homes?

- Forgetting to create layers of light, leading to an uninteresting interior appearance.
- Forgetting to highlight architectural features, artwork, and special items.
- Over-lighting a space with too many large down-lights, which can create a flat appearance with annoying glare.
- Using light bulbs (compact fluorescent lamps, LEDs) with the wrong color temperature, which can look harsh and industrial, both indoors and outside.

- Not investing in a good system for dimming the lights.
- Not investing in energy-efficient lamps and controls.

*Mike Noon, Allied ASID, LEED AP, Palindrome Lighting Design, Inc.*

## Why is a lighting plan important in a custom building or remodeling project?

I cannot imagine starting a building project without a lighting plan. It would be like starting a project without a building plan. We are the ones who can educate and consult with the customer on the latest technology and design. We know what works and what does not work in a room. There are thousands of lighting possibilities; why not consult someone who has all of the lighting information at their fingertips?

Why not take advantage of their expertise?

*Giorgina Schnurr, ASID Industry Partner, Dominion Lighting*

## What types of lighting are room-specific?

Since rooms in homes are used for many different purposes depending on the homeowner, I like to talk about lighting being task-specific rather than room-specific. For example, low-voltage accent lighting can be used to highlight pieces of artwork, sculptures or even draperies. Although frequently used in public spaces like foyers, vestibules and halls, accent lighting can be a dramatic addition to baths, bedrooms and any space where another layer of light would give the room an added dimension.

*Lisa Dugan, CLC, Burgess Lighting*