

Light bulb phase-out offers new role for unsung heroes of electronics revolution

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With the United States' phase-out of conventional incandescent light bulbs set to start in a few months, an article in the current edition of Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN) describes how the ban on 100-watt bulbs portends a huge new wave of growth for the once lowly light-emitting diode (LED).

In one of a three-part cover story package on the raw materials that enable the electronics and related industries, C&EN Senior Editor Alexander H. Tullo explains how LEDs have crept into everyday life in multiple waves. LEDs are perhaps best-known for their initial application as tiny light sources that form the numbers on digital clocks, serve as indicator lights on appliances, and transmit data on remote controls.

However, these unsung heroes of the electronics revolution have extended their reach. LEDs, for instance, first replaced fluorescent lights as the mainstay for backlight illumination on cell phones, laptop computers, and other small devices. Then LEDs' advantages — including longer life, small size, and low energy consumption — carved out a new role as backlights in flat-panel TVs. Now LEDs are poised to become an alternative to incandescents and fluorescents in home lighting.

More information: "Bright Outlook for LED Precursor" - pubs.acs.org/cen/coverstory/89/8928cover4.html

Provided by American Chemical Society

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