

International Association of Arson Investigators

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Val Martin
President
808 357-0497
martinv001@hawaii.rr.com

Scot Seguirant
1st Vice President

Thomas S. Santos, III
2nd Vice President

Robert Cravalho
Secretary
808 529-3286
rcravalho@honolulu.gov

Steve Whiting
Treasurer
808 271-4362
whitngs002@hawaii.rr.com

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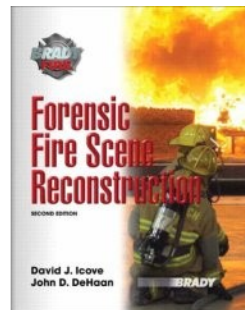
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Hawaii Chapter Newsletter



I would like to thank Glenn Solem from Hawaii Fire Dynamics and Sam Dannaway from S. Dannaway & Associates for all the hard work they did to bring doctors John DeHaan and Dave Icove on March 18 & 19. The conference was a success and a final list of 42 participants attended. The two-day conference concentrated on reconstruction of the fire scene, and

touched on the book that they both have authored.



Keep your calendar clear for the week of October 20, 2008. Our annual Hawaii Chapter conference is being planned for Maui. Possibly a three day conference with live burn. I would like to bring in two or three 4hr speakers to go over topics that are of interest to almost everyone. It can be very difficult to bring speak-

ers who are appealing to all facets of fire investigations. It can also be expensive. Please send me an email if you are interested in speaking on a particular subject. After meeting many members, I soon realized that we have a wealth of knowledge locally.

It would be great if a member of our own is willing to discuss topics of interest. Please contact me if you are interested. Plus it would save our chapter money since we don't need to pay someone. Don't worry, we can discuss expenses.

Aloha,
Val Martin
President

Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL's), Cost Savings vs Safety by Jeff Hooker, CFEI



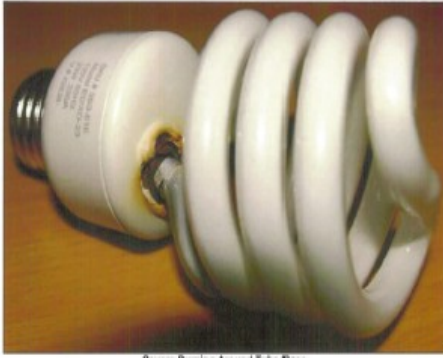
Photos from IMPACT TELEVIDEO website: http://www.execulink.com/impact/pur-lite_pro-9000X.htm

My daughter recently won a drawing/coloring contest that awarded her (as one of several prizes) two dozen Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs more commonly

known as CFL's. The CFL's have been and are still being marketed as the next best



thing in energy saving devices and like everyone else; we were excited to get them in-



marketed as the next best thing in energy saving devices and like everyone else; we were excited to get them installed.

Unfortunately, not long after we began using the new CFL's, reports started to surface regarding the use of mercury in the manufacturing of the ballasts. Although we were supposed to be saving on energy consumption (I did not notice any appreciable savings prior to discontinuing use of the CFL's), what were we to do with the bulbs when they burned out? Just throwing them into a land fill didn't make much sense and nobody seemed to want to address the problem. The feeling I got was since the bulbs are supposed to last for several years we'll (industry in general) deal with that issue when the time comes.

Now the internet is full of articles addressing an even more immediate danger with the CFL's potential for fire hazard. Most of the reports I have reviewed come from Canadian sources and one such advisory, the Electrical Safety Authority of Ontario, Canada notes their distress re-

garding end-of-life failures of CFL's. They are concerned that it can be difficult for consumers to distinguish between what is normal and what may be a precursor to fire or some other hazardous condition. The advisory goes on to address pre-mature end-of-life failures and notes certain observations that would indicate a CFL is failing, they are: flickering, bright orange or red glow, popping sounds, acrid odor, or browning of the ballast enclosure. If any of these conditions exist, the CFL should be removed from service. Some manufacturers have even provide replacement CFL's, but each case is different and you have to make the request directly to the manufacturer.

So what does the industry consider to be the "normal" end-of-life failure of the CFL's? The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in their research has noted this:

Compact fluorescent bulbs have several end-of-life failures that produce additional heat and smoke. In most cases, when the filament burns out or the electronic ballast fails, it emits smoke, chars or melts the plastic housing, or possibly breaks the glass tube; then the bulb no longer functions. UL 1993, Self-Ballasted Lamps and Lamp Adapters, requires the plastic housing of the bulb to meet UL 746C, Polymeric Materials – Use in Electrical Equipment Evaluations, for flammability rating.

This manner of end-of-life failure seems quite excessive for a light bulb much less

any consumer product (an incandescent light bulb simply stops working). And although I have not had any dramatic CFL failures, I did remove two with browning ballast enclosures. Both bulbs seemed much hotter to the touch than one would expect and both were well under their marketed life expectancy. Needless to say I have since removed all the CFL's in my home thinking better safe than sorry. I'm still trying to figure out what to do with the bulbs in regards to the mercury issue.

The local office of the U.S. CPSC here in Hawaii has been made aware of this and reports only one case involving a CFL recall and it posed no possibility of catching fire. My suggestion is that if you use CFL's, monitor them closely and replace them immediately if you note any change in their performance.

Respectfully,

Jeff S. Hooker, CFEI

Articles are that of the writer and are not necessarily the opinions of the IAAI or the Hawaii Chapter of the IAAI.

Chapter Membership Information

On the front page you will see the officers contact information. Please feel free to contact any of us with any questions or concerns you may have during the year. I would like to keep this newsletter active so I will need your support. My goal

is to keep all members up to date with what is happening in our chapter. Please send us your current information, i.e. phone numbers, email address, and mailing address so we may keep an up to date list of our members. Once I receive this informa-

tion I will send it as an attachment with the next newsletter.



Wear proper protective clothing & safety equipment when investigating fire