GE Lighting settles sex discrimination case with US Labor Department
Agreement includes $537K for 102 female applicants

BUCYRUS, Ohio — GE Lighting LLC has agreed to settle allegations of hiring discrimination following an investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. Under the terms of the agreement, the federal contractor will pay $537,000 in back wages and interest to 102 women who were rejected for entry-level attendant positions at the company's Bucyrus facility. GE Lighting will also extend job offers to at least five of the original class members as positions become available.

"I am pleased that we were able to work out a fair and mutually agreeable resolution with GE Lighting," said OFCCP Director Patricia A. Shiu. "The time is always right to shine a light on any and all barriers to equal opportunity in the workplace, and I encourage women who were previously denied jobs at GE's Bucyrus location to reconsider, secure in the knowledge that they will get a fair shake going forward."

During a scheduled compliance review, OFCCP investigators found that GE Lighting used the WorkKeys test as part of its selection process, even though it was not properly supported by a validation study that satisfies the requirements of the "Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures." The agency concluded that GE Lighting's hiring process systematically discriminated against female applicants, a violation of Executive Order 11246, which prohibits federal contractors from discriminating in employment on the basis of sex. GE Lighting has already ceased using the WorkKeys test, revised its selection process to ensure equal opportunity for all applicants and invited women to reapply under the revised hiring procedures. It has also extended one of the five job offers.

GE Lighting is a subsidiary of the Fairfield, Connecticut-based General Electric Co. In the past two years, GE Lighting held more than $1.8 billion in federal contracts to provide machines and equipment to the Air Force, Navy, Army and Defense Logistics Agency.

In addition to Executive Order 11246, OFCCP enforces Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. These three laws require that those who do business with the federal government, both contractors and subcontractors, follow the fair and reasonable standard that they not discriminate in employment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, disability or status as a protected veteran. For more information, visit http://www.dol.gov/ofccp.