

FTC Charges Company with Misrepresenting the Light Output and Life Expectancy of its Bulbs

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September 8, 2010

Yesterday, we [posted](#) that a window manufacturer had entered into a settlement with the Washington Attorney General's office over allegedly unsubstantiated energy efficiency claims. Today, the FTC [announced](#) that it has sued a light bulb manufacturer and its principals to stop them from exaggerating the efficiency, light output, and life expectancy of its Light Emitting Diode ("LED") bulbs.

Many of the ads claimed that the LED bulbs were more efficient than, and could save consumers money over, traditional bulbs. In its [complaint](#), the FTC alleges that, in many instances, the company's LED bulbs: (a) produced significantly less output than a typical incandescent bulb at the wattage represented in the ads; (b) produced significantly less lumens of light than the company represented in its ads; and (c) lasted less than the number of hours the company represented in its ads. The FTC is seeking a permanent injunction to stop the company's allegedly illegal conduct, as well as monetary redress for consumers who bought the deceptively labeled products.

Advertisers must ensure they have adequate testing to support performance claims. In addition, when making comparative claims, advertisers must ensure that they make apples-to-apples comparisons, or else disclose the material differences between the products being compared.