

# Landscape Lighting Design Guidelines

**Landscape Lighting Design Guidelines:** As with Architectural lighting, Mississippi State University realizes that landscape lighting is critical to the enhancement of the landscaping. It is therefore the requirement that landscape lighting adhere to the following guidelines.

- Highlight trees that have interesting compositions in both dormant and leafy conditions.
- Use up light to enhance large canopies on deciduous trees. If the tree canopy is large and impressive, simple up lighting from the ground can be very successful. “Moonlighting” effects also work well; where the fixtures are located within the tree canopy shining both up and down.
- Consider viewing angles. It is not necessary to light all sides of a tree, if it will only be viewed from one direction.
- Integrate lighting equipment into plant materials. All fixtures and wiring should be well hidden either in mature trees, or in planting materials that hide the floodlight so that the lighting has a minimal impact during the day. Fixture size, color and mounting details are important considerations in the integration process.
- Avoid frontal floodlighting. Lighting a tree or plant with bright light from a distant location is to be avoided. This approach can temporarily “blind” nighttime passersby, which can disorient them and make them more susceptible to crimes.
- Minimize light trespass and glare. Light fixtures should be designed so that the light goes exactly where it’s intended. Special care should be taken to include louvers, glare shields, or barn doors to the front of floodlight fixtures to prevent light pollution. Extra light bouncing into the atmosphere interferes with the work of astronomers and can disrupt the neighboring buildings.
- Avoid overly bright lighting. The intent of lighting landscape materials is to enhance the aesthetics of the campus, not to create “beacons”. The brightest is not necessarily the best. Use low-wattage sources.
- Choose light sources carefully. Different light sources render colors differently. Careful consideration should be made to choose colors of light that complement the color and texture of plant materials. High Pressure Sodium lighting should NEVER be used on plant materials.

