

## Nightscaping® Newsletter

### Installing A Basic Lighting System



Scott Lite with spread lens positioned within Niko Blue Hydrangea Garden.  
Residence in Harvey Cedars - Long Beach Island, New Jersey  
Photo courtesy of Tanek Hook, Reynolds Landscaping

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Over the years I have seen some great installations that were poorly designed, and some great designs that were poorly installed. You can have a beautiful design using the best equipment, but unless properly installed, you end up frustrated and have a disappointed homeowner. **When installed correctly, a system can last a lifetime, but only months or a couple of years when incorrectly installed.**

Once you have made your design, chosen the fixtures and lamps, calculated voltage drop and wire runs, it's time to do your installation. **Whenever possible I recommend assembling everything for the job the day or night before so not to waste time doing so at the job site.** This way you will be sure to have everything you'll need, without running around to get what you may have forgotten.

**When arriving at the job, the first thing I always do is to place everything where it will be installed making sure spacing and location are as they should be.** As far as Pathlights, I recommend placing

one on each side of entrance steps for balance and visibility, and then going back and forth down the walk. If there is lawn on one side, sometimes this is not possible. One way to make it possible is to cut a half circle or oval of lawn around the fixture, filling it with mulch or stone, allowing you to cut the grass without hitting the fixture. **It can also look nice to put all the Pathlights on one side of the path, choosing the side that isn't lawn.**

The placement of fixtures along the façade of the house is crucial. The most common mistake is putting them too far away from the wall, creating hot spots on the wall or shining lights in the windows. **I prefer to place Uplights four to six inches from the wall, grazing the architecture of the building to bring out the texture.** There is a similar principle when installing lights that will highlight trees or special items. Sometimes you want to graze the trunk of trees or palms, bringing out the texture. Other times you may want to pull the light source further away from the tree to illuminate the canopy. The two in tandem can be effective if you have an established tree with a large canopy. Its a good idea to wire tree lights with additional available wattage, to compensate for future growth of the trees.

Next its time to run your wire. I find it best to start each run from where the Powercenter<sup>(TM)</sup> is located and go from there to the closest fixture, until you get to the farthest fixture. I like to loop the wire around each fixture as not to get confused with which wire goes to what, and to leave additional length at each fixture. **It is also very important to label each wire at the transformer end and keep notes as to which wire goes to what and the voltage on it.** This will be extremely useful in the future when maintaining the system. I find different colored tape works well for me.

Finally, it is time to make your connections and bury your wire. **The most common failure with any system is caused by poor connections.** At Nightscaping®, we recommend using our [Ace Connectors](#) which create a lifetime waterproof splice. When doing connections, I always work from the last fixture on a run back to the transformer, and do the same when burying the wire. Wire should be at least six inches down in lawn areas and three to four inches in beds. In flower beds I prefer to use sod staples every so often to keep them buried without having to

go too deep. When crossing bed lines it is crucial to assure the wire won't be cut when edging occurs in the future. The most common method of burying wire is to run the wire through conduit. I find two problems with this method. One is that a power edger can cut through PVC, and the other is frost forcing the conduit to the surface making it unsightly.

**In my next article I will discuss mounting and wiring the transformer as well as mounting fixtures in trees, on structures and other special situations.**

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Constitutions and Postlites wash light over stone BBQ grill facade. Artisan downlights accent grill space and paver patio. Residence in West Creek, New Jersey  
 Photo courtesy of Tanek Hood, Reynolds Landscaping

**Contractor of the Week**

Tanek Hood

What Tanek Hood's customers know is that he cares about them, their homes, their environment, and their needs, while creating some of the most dynamic and functional lighting systems anywhere. **Tanek designs all the lighting for Reynolds Landscaping of Manahawkin, New Jersey.** Reynolds Landscaping, which has been designing, installing, and maintaining

coastal and mainland landscape environments for more than 20 years, entered the lighting market 7 years ago, and has been installing Nightscaping® systems exclusively for the last 6 years.

When asked why he only uses Nightscaping®, Hood says, **"Definitely the quality, but it is significantly more than that. There's an attitude and a sense of community that is a part of Nightscaping® that really aligns with the Reynolds attitude - a commitment to quality and integrity, and to building relationships. Both Reynolds Landscaping and Nightscaping® encourage me to explore as a designer. They trust that I can break out of the mold and deliver lighting that not only enhances property values - considerably - but also enhances the quality of their lives."**

Many of the homes Hood must design present space challenges since Long Beach Island homes in NJ tend to have average lot sizes of 75 by 100 feet. But Hood loves the challenge. Tanek Hood realizes that, **"What is most important to me is that when I've completed a project, the lighting has transformed the space in a way that has perfectly translated the customer's vision, that it works with their lifestyle, and that it works with the community's characteristics."**

Hood finds that putting himself in the homeowners' shoes enables him to see the big picture. **In addition to vision, Hood brings a meticulous dedication to understanding the technical aspects, using the best components, and knowing the exact fixtures for each customer's personal environment.**

Tanek and his new wife Katie love to drive around at night, admiring his lighting work. Now that the weather is warming up, they also enjoy viewing Tanek's work from their boat in the bay. **"I want my customers to have something of true value. I love to create beauty, and frankly never get tired of seeing that beauty."** That's probably why Tanek has been described as an artist whose medium is light, with the landscape as his canvas.

\*All landscape photos display Tanek's design

creativity and the enthusiasm he has for his work.

**Tanek Hood**

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**See the frog?**

Photo courtesy of Joe Nerkowski of Holiday Lighting in Allen Park, MI

## **Nightscaping® News**

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Nightscaping® is proud to announce that we are finally being recognized by restoration groups world-wide for providing habitat sanctuaries to insects, amphibians, and small animals. Our fixture that was once referred to as [Dial-A-Lite](#) is now known as Dial-A-Nap.

**Do you have a fun photo that demonstrates the valuable shelter that Nightscaping® is providing in your local environment?** Or any other unconventional way that creatures have made use of your lighting system? Send it in today and we'd love to share it with our viewers.

[info@nightscaping.com](mailto:info@nightscaping.com)

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Wrightliters with yoke mount installed below bulkhead to accent sailboat and wooden dock. In the background, Postliters are mounted on deck railing on waterfront. Residence in High Bar Harbor - Long Beach Island, New Jersey  
Photo courtesy of Tanek Hood, Reynolds Landscaping

## Lamp Information

**Sealed Beam Lamps (Par 36)** offer you a wide variety of beam spread patterns and light intensities based on your specification of individual lamp and lens configuration. Each lamp is fully waterproof and weather resistant. The life expectancy of sealed beam lamps is measured in hours of life as determined by closely controlled laboratory tests at intended voltage ratings. Actual hours of operation will vary in the field based on the particular lamp, installation practices and environmental conditions present.

**MR-16 Lamps** are quartz halogen bulbs that produce a whiter, more intense light than incandescent lamps of comparable wattage. They allow you to achieve excellent color rendition and maintain lumen output for the life of the lamp.

**Bayonet Base** design provides for electrical contact and lamp support within the fixture. Bayonet bases are recommended over screw bases on job sites where vibration or corrosion are factors.

**The automotive industry has proven the reliability of the wedge based lamp under some of the most severe operating conditions imaginable.** Wedge base lamps are a single, integrated unit. The lack of soldered connections minimize problems associated with heat build up or corrosion.

## Lamp Charts

Need a [Lamp Chart](#) detailing the various options of lamps available and all of it's associated features? Our website has a

chart composed of Par 36, MR 16, Single Contact Bayonet, Mini Bayonet, T-1 Wedge Base, T-3 Wedge Base, T-5 Wedge Base, Double End Contact, T3 Bi-Pin G4, T4 Bi-Pin G6, MR-11 and MR-8 lamps. The components of each lamp covered are Base of Lamp, A.C. Volts, A.C. Watts, Candle Power, Beam Spread, Comparable Wattage to 120V Lamps, and Average Life Hours.

There is also a printable [Pdf Lamp Chart](#) (better visibility and printing) if you would like to take a copy of the information into the field with you or to client meetings.

If you would also like to have available Beam Spread and Foot Candles at a specific distance away from the lamp, you can view our **Photometrics Charts** as follows: [Par 36 \(sealed beam lamps\)](#), [MR-16](#), [MR-11](#), [Single-Contact Bayonet](#), [Wedge-Base](#), [Xenon](#), [AR-111](#).

If you would like **Pdf Photometric Charts** for better clarity and printing convenience, click on any of the following links: [Par 36 \(sealed beam lamps\)](#), [MR-16](#), [MR-11](#), [Single-Contact Bayonet](#), [Wedge-Base](#), [Xenon](#), [AR-111](#).



## [Seegarliter](#)

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**The inception of the Seegarliter came about when Jay Hornbeak, an old dear friend of Bill's, was asked to light the driveway to Bill Gates home with absolutely no visible light or fixtures showing.** Lighting from the trees was forbidden because it would emphasize that there was a driveway, even though it was alarmed and gated. The right side of the driveway was a retaining wall about 3'-5' high built

with flat stones.

**Designed to fit the situation, the Seegarliter was born.** It was placed horizontal to the ground, towards the top of the wall, with the light opening up approximately 3" from the stone and placed 6' on center up the entire driveway. **Jay was able to satisfy the request, pleasing Mr. Gates. Since the Seegarliter was mounted through the rock retaining wall, no fixture nor light source was visible without close inspection.** Once the copper fixture weathered to the look of an old penny, it resembled a cigar, thus giving it its name.

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