

THE RISE OF LED

Lighting's future may be summed up in 3 letters

By Mikalee Byerman

Imagine a world where you install a light bulb in your sweet newborn's nursery, only to replace that light bulb when that newborn is a thriving 20-year-old — and no longer even lives at home.

That's the world of today, thanks to LED lighting.

Light-emitting diodes, or LEDs, offer significant advantages to traditional incandescent bulbs — not the least of which is an estimated 20-year lifespan, or up to a whopping 100,000 hours of use time. According to energy-efficiency expert and HGTV host Jeff Wilson, LED lighting is better because:

- **It's energy efficient, using 80 to 90 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs and 40 to 50 percent less than compact fluorescent lamps, or CFLs.**
- **It's non-toxic (no mercury) and recyclable.**
- **It's durable and resistant to shock and vibration.**
- **It's relatively cool to operate.**



According to a recent *New York Times* article, the future is bright indeed for LEDs. These lights now occupy 18 percent of the global lighting market, with a projected rise to 70 percent by 2020.

LEDs come in spotlights and tracks, rope lights and floods, decorative bulbs and globes. They are especially popular for applications where safety and energy consumption are major factors:

OUTDOORS: Warm white LED light is 20 times brighter than a standard solar light.

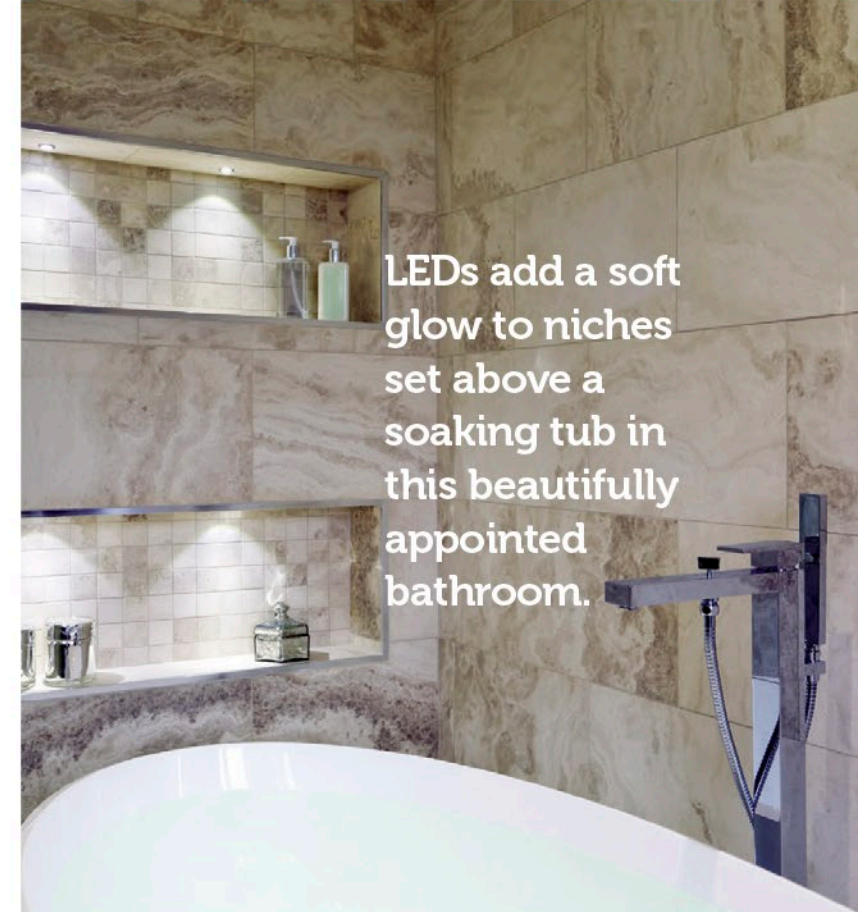
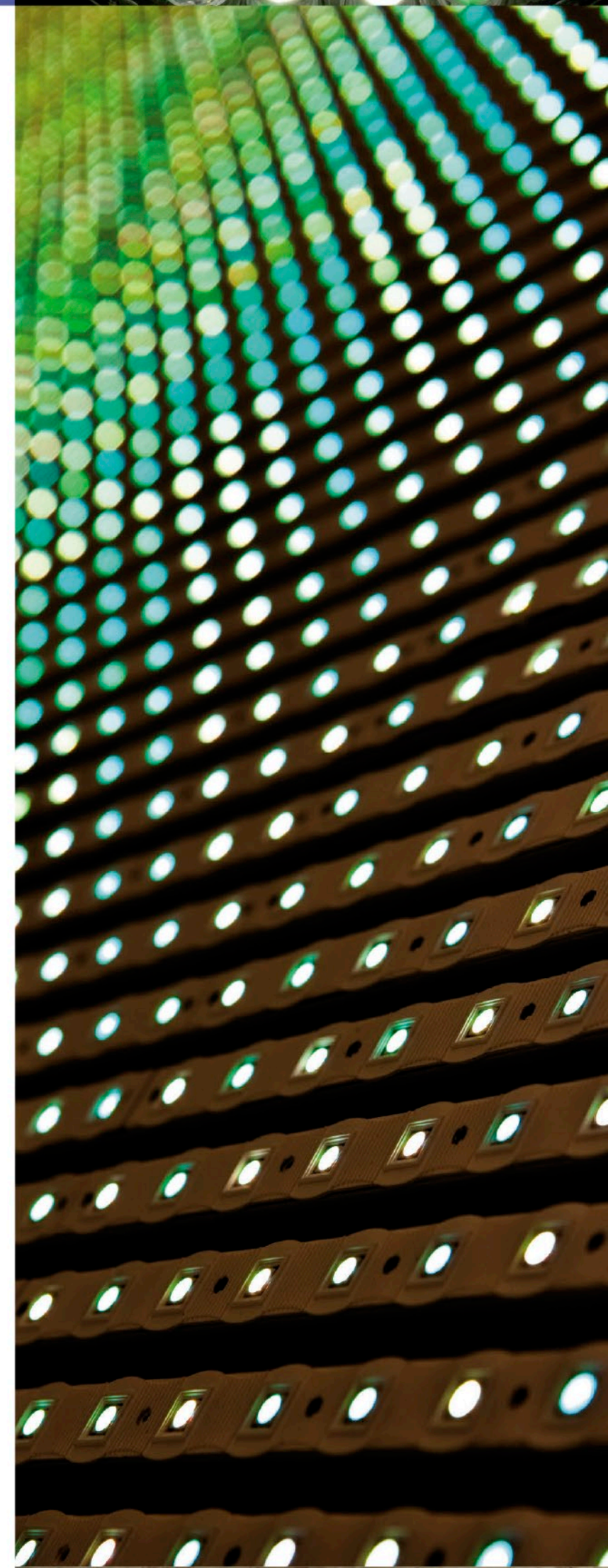
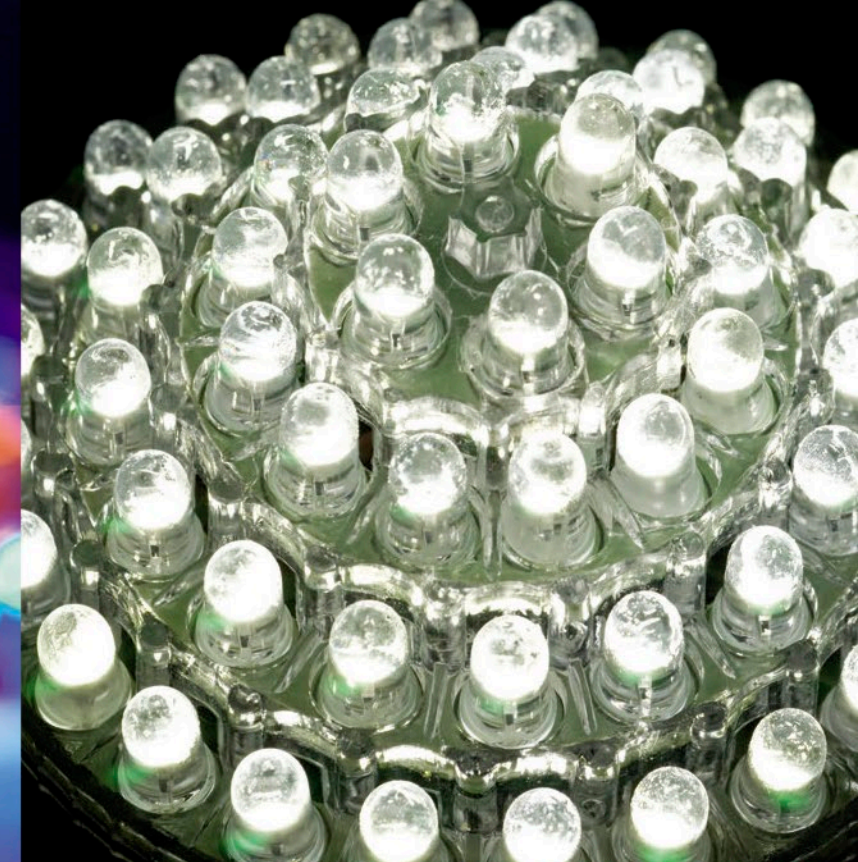
UNDER CABINETS: Small and directional LEDs are perfect for task lighting and casting a glow on countertop cookbooks.

HALLWAYS AND STAIRCASES: In areas where lights are left on all night, you'll use less energy in an LED's lifetime than in one or two years with an incandescent.

Quick tip

LOOK FOR THE LUMENS

Back in the day, a shopper buying a 60-watt bulb knew exactly what he or she was getting — an incandescent of a particular brightness. With CFLs and LEDs in the mix, today's consumers buy based on lumens, a measurement of light. As a blogger put it for lighting company TCP Inc., "One lumen is equivalent to the amount of light put out by one birthday candle when you are standing one foot away from it." Look for about 450 lumens to get something similar to an old-fashioned 60-watt bulb.



LEDs add a soft glow to niches set above a soaking tub in this beautifully appointed bathroom.