



---

---

# Ωmega Church Consultants, Inc.

---

---

architectural • financial • consulting  
construction management

## Lighting – Part 2

Last month we introduced the importance of lighting to church design and operation. The most common lighting types for church use are incandescent, fluorescent, high pressure sodium (HPS), and metal halide (MH).

Incandescent lamps offer the advantages of low initial cost, compactness, instant light, and lumen control through dimming. However, they are relatively inefficient, limited to low light output, can generate significant heat, and have a short life span.

Fluorescent lighting offers low brightness and a relatively large surface area so it is good for diffuse, non-directed lighting. It operates more economically than incandescent lighting. Fluorescent lamps work best indoors and prefer a temperature of about 70 degrees. They don't generate much heat but can produce significant noise.

High pressure sodium lamps have been used for many years in parking lots, warehouses, and along roadways where the yellow color of the light and long start-up time are not critical.

Compared to incandescent lamps, metal halide lamps are more costly initially, yet are 3-5 times more efficient. A 100 watt MH lamp provides 5 times the lumen output of a 100 watt incandescent bulb, and the bulb has 15-20 times the lifespan. Metal halide light can be directed, but is not dimmable. It may take 5 to 20 minutes for MH lamps to reach full output. A major advantage of MH is the white color of the light which most closely simulates sunlight.

Jeff Thomas is Vice President of Omega Church Consultants, Inc., Church Designers and Builders, located in Indianapolis. You may contact him at [jeff@omegachurchdesign.com](mailto:jeff@omegachurchdesign.com) or (317) 359-6248 or visit the Omega website at <http://www.omegachurchdesign.com>.  
Copyright 2001 All Rights Reserved.