

The Telegraph

Lightbulb ban puts fairground rides at risk

Traditional fairground rides such as merry-go-rounds, ghost trains and carousels are at risk of "losing their authenticity" because of the Brussels ban on light bulbs.

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Incandescent light bulbs have been banned by the European Union to cut back carbon dioxide emissions.

Clear, pearl and frosted 100 watt bulbs will also not be on sale from September 1 with a shift towards 25 and 40 watt bulbs.

However, officials at the Dingles Fairground Heritage Centre, which houses Britain's largest collection of classic rides, claim the new bulbs will not illuminate their machines.

The centre believes the rides used in parades, fairs and circuses for over 100 years will be plunged into darkness and will lose their "authenticity".

Guy Belshaw, spokesman for the Fairground Heritage Centre, said the EU was "legislating against a bit of fun" and is asking for the public to donate traditional light bulbs before they run out.

[EU light bulbs offer dim future \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/6110547/Energy-saving-light-bulbs-offer-dim-future.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/6110547/Energy-saving-light-bulbs-offer-dim-future.html)

He said: "The traditional incandescent bulbs give a soft glow that adds to the atmosphere and creates the ambiance of when the rides were at the peak of their popularity.

"It is extremely difficult to find bulbs domestically and the import supply has completely dried up. The new bulbs give off a much more cold, harsh light and we want to retain the integrity of the rides."

The centre, in Lifton, Devon, boasts Victorian roundabouts, a 1940's ghost train and little-known novelty rides which use hundreds of coloured light bulbs each year.

A 'Supersonic Skid' which spins skidding cabs in a circle and is currently being restored, needs a total of 1,400 lamps.

The Fairground Heritage Trust says it has enough 110 volt lamps to last the next two years but will then run out.

Mr Belshaw said: "We are really short of the coloured ones - we could lacquer them yellow and red but they do not always look the same. We are just hoping someone will have a supply somewhere."

Bulbs with the right voltage are common in the US but they are manufactured with a screw fitting rather than the bayonet-style found on the rides.

The trust recently sourced 1,000 clear lamps but want to find more before they run out.

A voluntary initiative to phase out the old-fashioned bulbs has been in place since 2007, but it will be illegal to import the conventional pearl or frosted bulbs, or incandescent bulbs of 100 watts, from September 1.

People have reportedly been hoarding the old fashioned bulbs around Europe with enforcement agencies ready to crack down on those who continue to import them.

Any individual found importing the bulbs into the EU faces a £5,000 fine, while companies could face an unlimited fine.

In Britain, trading standards officers will carry out inspections and members of the public will be able to report any shop continuing to stock the illegal bulbs.

People buying the energy efficient bulbs will save them around £37 per annum on energy bills and save Britain one million tonnes of carbon every year.

Low energy lights use a fifth of the energy of incandescent lights, cost around £3 each but are supposed to last around seven years.