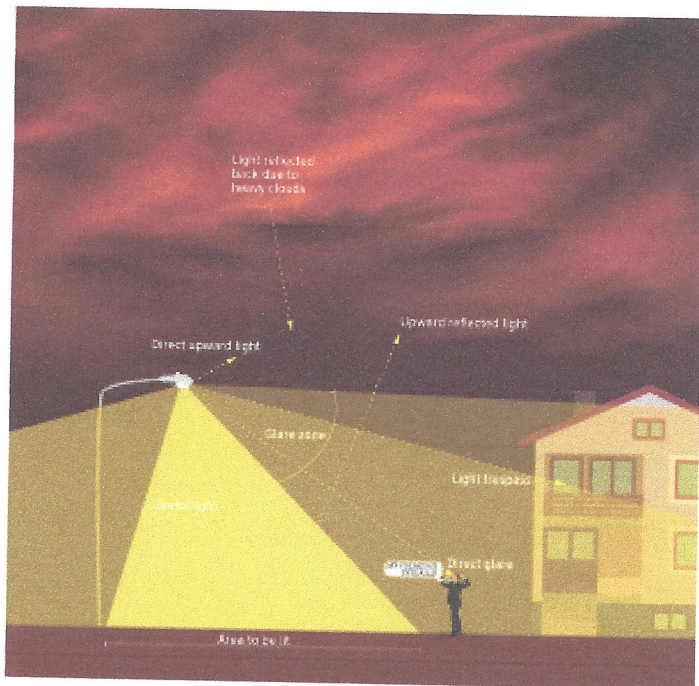


What is Light Pollution?

Most of us are familiar with air, water, and land pollution, but did you know that light can also be a pollutant?

The inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light – known as light pollution – can have serious environmental consequences for humans, wildlife, and our climate. Components of light pollution include:

- **Glare** – excessive brightness that causes visual discomfort
- **Skyglow** – brightening of the night sky over inhabited areas
- **Light trespass** – light falling where it is not intended or needed
- **Clutter** – bright, confusing and excessive groupings of light sources



The infographic above illustrates the different components of light pollution and what “good” lighting looks like. (Image by Anezka Gocova, in “The Night Issue”, Alternatives Journal 39:5 (2013). Click to enlarge.

Light pollution is a side effect of industrial civilization. Its sources include building exterior and interior lighting, advertising, commercial properties, offices, factories, streetlights, and illuminated sporting venues.

The fact is that much outdoor lighting used at night is inefficient, overly bright, poorly targeted, improperly shielded, and, in many cases, completely unnecessary. This light, and the electricity used to create it, is being wasted by spilling it into the sky, rather than focusing it on to the actual objects and areas that people want illuminated.