

# FRANCE

## Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) of 2005 Fluorescent Ballast Requirements: Application to Electric Signs

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) of 2005 (now incorporated into Title 42 USC, section 6295[g]) requires that specified efficient fluorescent lamp ballasts be manufactured on and after 1 July 2009 and supplied in “luminaires” starting 1 July 2010.

Detailed reading of the requirements of this law indicates it does not apply to fluorescent signs unless the sign uses one or two F34T12 lamps.

The Department of Energy (DOE) was asked to clarify the use of fluorescent ballasts for T12 lamps and the law’s application to electric signs. The DOE noted that EPCA 2005 specifically requires the use of more efficient fluorescent lamp ballasts for applications using:

- One or two F34T12 lamps  
or
- Two F96T12ES or HO/ES lamps  
(with an exemption for use at 20F temperature or lower, for two F96T12HO lamps used in outdoor signs).

[Title 42, USC, Section 6295(g), para (8) (A) (ii) (III) with the exemption listed under para (8) (C) (ii)]

Per the DOE, EPCA 2005 requires lighting devices, including fluorescent electric signs, using (only) these types and quantities of lamps to use specified efficient fluorescent ballasts. No other fluorescent lamp styles or bulb combinations are listed; efficient ballast requirements should not apply for other lamp types or quantities.

The sign manufacturer must determine what compliment of fluorescent lamp types and quantities will be used in each sign constructed. It is France’s understanding that signs rarely, if ever, use F34T12 lamps. Signs using (only) two F96T12HO/ES lamps usually use components intended for outdoor applications (20F or lower) even if the sign is actually used indoors. Finally, based on our experience and the types of application inquires we receive, we understand most fluorescent signs use more than two lamps (of any type). The ECPA 2005 limits its efficient ballast requirements to one or two lamps of the two types listed.

For these reasons, the efficient fluorescent ballast requirements of ECPA 2005 (Title 42 USC 6295[g]) will rarely apply to fluorescent electric signs.