

Consumers will soon be able to replace the most common light bulb in U.S. households, the 60-watt incandescent, with an ultra-efficient LED, according to manufacturer Royal Philips Electronics.

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[The company unveiled](#) its new LED at the Lightfair International trade show in Las Vegas, just two days after [Home Depot announced](#) it's begun selling a \$20 LED replacement for the 40-watt incandescent.

As incandescents begin their Congress-mandated phaseout in 2012, companies are scurrying to develop and market more efficient replacements.

Philips says its 12-watt Endura light bulb is the industry's first to replace its century-old predecessor. The company says the LED delivers the same soft white light and dimmability but uses 80% less energy and lasts 25 times longer. The LED will be available to consumers later this year, likely in December, but its price hasn't been finalized.

More than 425 million 60-watt incandescents are sold each in the United States, representing half the domestic incandescent market, according to Philips. The company estimates its new LED has the potential to save 32.6 terawatt-hours of electricity each year -- enough to power the lights of 14% of U.S. households.