

Why America's Christmas Lighting Culture Isn't Going Anywhere, Even with Permanent Lighting on the Rise

Novelty Lights champions holiday tradition as technology evolves, keeping C9 bulbs and classic décor at the heart of seasonal joy and year-round lighting.

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-- Every December, neighborhoods across America burst into color—[C9](#) bulbs strung along rooftops, miniature lights wrapped around trees and homes decked out in everything from warm white elegance to dazzling RGB light displays set to music. For decades, this ritual has marked the start of the holiday season, representing joy, nostalgia and togetherness.



House with Christmas lights along the eaves during the wintertime.

But as technology evolves, permanent outdoor lighting systems have entered the market. These sleek, app-controlled installations offer homeowners year-round flexibility without the hassle of seasonal setup. While undeniably convenient, they are not here to replace the tradition of Christmas lighting—they're here to complement it.

“

At the end of the day, Christmas lighting isn't about how the lights look,” Hardaway added. “It's about what they mean—and the people who take the time to put them up.”

Jim Hardaway

“At Novelty Lights our focus is where it has always been, lighting up the homes and businesses of our customers, their customers, and bringing joy to each season,” said Jim Hardaway, COO of Novelty Lights. “Our core product lines - C9 bulbs, mini-lights, stringers, and traditional [décor](#) - are

rooted in holiday magic that can't be replicated with a tap of a phone.”

The Rise—and Limitations—of Permanent Lighting

While permanent lighting offers clean, modern effects chasing gradients or soft wall washes, it lacks the classic sparkle and emotional pull of traditional lights. Most systems don't replicate the pinpoint twinkle of C9 bulbs or the warm charm of mini lights, nor do they deliver the same sentimental value.

"Even homes with permanent systems often supplement them with vintage bulbs, yard décor, or traditional strands," said Hardaway. "It's about capturing that irreplaceable feeling, the one you get when you are creating the perfect holiday scene in your front yard."

A Deeply Rooted American Tradition

Holiday lighting is more than seasonal décor. It's a cherished American tradition. From early 20th-century tree-lighting ceremonies to today's elaborate home displays, decorating with lights has evolved into a beloved pastime. Testing old strings, climbing rooftops, picking out [colors](#) and admiring the neighborhood glow are timeless moments that bring people together.

Pop culture has long embraced this spirit, perhaps most famously in National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation, where Clark Griswold's over-the-top 25,000-light display became a symbol of holiday effort, pride and joyful excess.

Permanent Lighting as a Holiday Accent, Not the Main Event

There's no question that permanent lighting has a place in today's homes. It adds security and year-round flexibility. But when it comes to the holiday season, traditional lights, the DIY and installer efforts, and the memories they create, shine the brightest.

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About Novelty Lights

Founded in Denver, Colorado in 1999, Novelty Lights has specialized in holiday and decorative lighting for over 25 years. From classic C9 bulbs to cutting-edge LED options, the company is dedicated to preserving the magic of traditional holiday lighting for generations to come.

Jim Hardaway

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