Lighting the Dormitories

How satisfactory is desk lighting in the undergraduate dormitory? It has been shown that many students suffered from eye strain, The Tech has now completed an investigation of these lamps.

Last spring Professor Parry Bloom, of the department of Electrical Engineering, on an illumination survey, showed that in the present desklamps are far from fulfilling the requirements for a good desk lamp. This applies to both the lamps in the S-4 building and the gooseneck lamps in the undergraduate houses.

Their chief shortcomings are evidently very bad glare and an inadequate distribution of light over the entire desk area. These factors are largely responsible for eye strain.

The Tech next attempted to find out just how unsatisfactory lighting is in the preservation of the students' eyes. Dr. Moore, Medical Director of the Institute, issued the following statement: "That any personal knowledge concerning the lighting system in the students' rooms in the dormitories, is my feeling that the best possible type of lamp should be provided. I am in full accord with any investigation which would improve the lighting conditions in the dormitories."

What then is the best type of lamp? We made an inquiry into the situation with the aid of the illuminating engineering division of the department of Electrical Engineering, and came to the following conclusions:

I. Standard desk lamps are the best type of desk lamps on the market today. They, more than any other lamp, fulfill the requirements for good desk lighting. These lamps have not yet reached a sufficient stage of perfection and are not likely to reach it for another few years. L.E.S. lamps have proved to be very satisfactory in the Graduate House.

2. There is no prospect of getting new lamps for 635 dormitory residents. The present lamps have very little salvage value and would therefore be a total loss. We suggest that the Institute consider the purchase of an inexpensive L.E.S. lamp for two reasons: The investment will be relatively small. In a few years this superior lamp is developed which the Institute wants to buy, the loss due to obsolescence will not be excessive.

One manufacturer quotes the required number of lamps at $2.45 each, (includes freight estimated by the Tech). The total investment for this lamp would thereby be $1,531.20. The Tech estimates the additional maintenance cost over the present lights at $45 a year.

Dormitory residents appreciate the comfort of their temporary lamps and do not complain much. However, the fact that an estimated half of them buy their own lamps to replace those supplied by the dormitory indicates that an adjustment is needed.

Cheap I.E.S. lamp is the answer.

A Change is Indicated

By a count of 234 to 91, Institute students voted in favor of changing the lighting in their spring vacation coming at Easter time instead of around April 19.

Of course not everyone in the Institute voted on the question. But the conditions under which the poll was held and a survey of the reasons why students did not take part indicate that a representative cross section of Tech expressed their views. At any rate, the majority of almost 80 percent seems pretty large to lose any misgivings about the choice of the voters.

It is to be hoped that the results of the poll will be motivating. Spring vacation, as it is given to understand, is set at the time it is, chiefly because Tech students allegedly close shop at that time. The majority in favor of the change indicates that they do not. With no other cause for it to remain where it is, spring vacation should be transported to the spot on the calendar where the students want it.

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