

The Fabulous  
**Lighting Maven**  
*Unexpectedly Illuminating*

ACTION-ORIENTED PEARLS OF WISDOM FOR INDUSTRIAL MANAGERS AND CONTRACTORS  
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Dear Reader:

Any processor of food or drink – if it is to be consumed by human or animal – must concern him/herself with food safety. Rest assured, someone else is concerned, and the more understanding a Facilities Manager has of the safety rating process, the more prepared that person will be, and the safer his/her plant will be.

The National Sanitation Foundation (as of recently renamed NSF International) is responsible for among other things, rating a food processing lighting fixture, and in fact approving (or disapproving) of its use in this type of environment.

**NSF-RATED LIGHTING**

Josh Schroeder of Lumen Link wrote an informative blog for Litetronics' website on the NSF Rating System, and you can find it here: [NSF-Rated Lighting: Food Safety, the Law, and Your LED Lighting Options](#). He goes into some detail as to what the rating system is, the seven steps a manufacturer must engage in to receive NSF approval, and what it means to a buyer in terms of what types of fixtures require approval and where the approved fixture can be utilized. We think you'll find it to be a helpful read.

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Within these locations, there can be work zones that require their own footcandle specifications. The FDA lists out three specific zones of light intensity that are required under the Food Code. The basic Food Code lighting intensity requirements encompass the following three criteria (Food Safety Magazine, "[Shedding Light on the Art and Science of Lighting](#)"):

- The first requirement specifies providing at least 110 lux (10-ft. candles) at a distance of 75 cm (30 inches) above the floor, in walk-in refrigeration units and dry food storage areas and in other areas and rooms during periods of cleaning.
- The second light intensity requirement calls for at least 220 lux (20-ft. candles) where food is provided for self-service or where packaged foods are sold or offered for consumption, as well as inside equipment such as reach-in and under-counter refrigerators. It goes on to specify 220 lux, measured at a distance of 75 cm (30 inches) above the floor in areas used for handwashing, warewashing, equipment and utensil storage, and in toilet rooms.
- The third Food Code criteria requires at least 540 lux (50-foot candles) at a surface where a food employee is working with food or working with utensils or equipment such as knives, slicers, grinders or saws where employee safety is a factor. It really does not address light quality, directionality or other components of illumination related to our visual acuity and factors necessary to maintain proper food safety and sanitation. In short, if you can't properly see it, it probably isn't clean or safe.



U.S. Power is an industrial energy services company that specializes in the reduction of energy consumption across a broad array of manufacturing and food processing facilities located in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. In addition, the company publishes a useful curation of lighting-oriented information from the marketplace, and consolidates it into this concise, twice per month letter known as The Fabulous Lighting Maven, distributed to Facilities Managers throughout the nation.

While the company prides itself in its diversity, it owns and operates a niche lighting contracting firm as well, known as U.S. Power Vision, LLC. With a core business in and around industrial LED lighting, it keeps itself and its clients at the cutting edge of illuminating technologies, all aimed at providing – from the eyes to the fingertips – exceptional illumination, superb control and intuitive simplicity.