

# Optec LED LIGHTING

## HIGH-QUALITY LED LUMINAIRES MAKE DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT AT CAR DEALERSHIP

### Love Chevrolet Columbia, South Carolina

Love Chevrolet is a family owned business established in 1961. Love Chevrolet is a member of the Love Automotive/RV Group that also represents Buick, GMC Truck, Mitsubishi, Hino Trucks and multiple RV brands.

As a customer-focused and forward-thinking business, Michael Love, president of Love Automotive/RV, is always looking for ways to reduce costs and increase operational efficiencies while promoting sound sustainability practices. To that end, Love Chevrolet recently completed a LED lighting upgrade.



In a one-for-one replacement, (148) 1000W metal halide (MH) fixtures on the dealership's primary and secondary sales lots and driveway were upgraded to 120W, 240W and 300W LED area light luminaires. Additionally, (100) 400W MH fixtures were upgraded to 120W high bay LED luminaires in the service check-in area and service bays, and (25) 400W MH fixtures were upgraded to 70W low bay LED luminaires in the detailing shop. Also retrofit were nine 250W MH fixtures to 60W LED wall packs and (18) 400W MH fixtures to 90W LED canopy lights in the primary sales lot.

This replacement is reducing the dealership's electricity energy consumption by almost 50 percent. Prior to the LED installation, the monthly electric bill was \$14,270, since the upgrade the monthly bill is averaging \$7,000 while also increasing the foot candles—light on the ground and the light uniformity increased.

The previously installed MH fixtures would regularly burn out. However, at the cost of \$50 - \$70 each light plus labor hours the dealership delayed repairing them until sections were poorly illuminated because they needed to rent a bucket truck to change lights. Unfortunately, as soon as a group of lights were repaired, other fixtures would burn out—the dealership never experienced all fixtures working at the same time. Also, as the lights aged, the quality of light decreased causing different color lighting in various areas. Now, the new luminaires are virtually maintenance free and come with a five year warranty.

"These lights make our inventory show better and stand out more from the street," said Ben Hoover, general manager Love Chevrolet. "Additionally, we anticipate these new lights will last three times longer than the old fixtures and, the best part, eliminate maintenance and the need to move cars to accommodate the rented bucket trucks to change out the burned out lamps," continued Hoover.

The automobile dealership industry, like many businesses, typically only has one chance to make a positive impression with the customer, so it's important to show products as best as possible. The luminaires' uniform lighting eliminates dim areas between lamp poles, improving the automobiles' vibrancy.

The new LED lights also have made a tremendous difference in the service drive and repair shop. On the first day of installation, only one out of five rows of lights was able to be mounted. Yet those fixtures alone made

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a dramatic improvement and clearly showed the distinction between the two technologies. The LED luminaires provided brighter illumination without any shadows, which the technicians noticed immediately.

"The upgraded luminaires deliver crisp, uniform illumination across the shop floor, detail bay and parts department," added Mark Williamson, service and body shop director. "Additionally, the service technicians previously used fluorescent drop-light bulbs to see underneath the vehicle, these are now almost eliminated with the addition of the LED lights, which have improved technicians' productivity, safety and morale," continued Williamson.

Customers also have noticed the difference in the service drive area, and have positively commented on this and inquired about the changes.

After seeing the product, learning about the energy savings, and SCE&G EnergyWise<sup>®</sup> incentives and determining that the dealership would have only a two year ROI on the \$250,000 total investment, it was an easy decision to retrofit. The LED luminaires provide consistent light levels, reduce hazardous waste disposal and provide dramatically more efficient light distribution than the MH fixtures.

"When we looked at the energy savings we're getting, and that it's really the right thing to do for the environment, it's just a win-win for everybody," Hoover explained.

"These lights absolutely provide the level of illumination we were looking for to make our location bright and secure," Michael Love, president of Love Automotive/RV said. "And, as the guy paying the bills, I'm impressed with the tremendous energy savings and payback. My only regret is that we didn't do it sooner," Love continued.

