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FLASHLIGHTS

There is never enough light in campgrounds at night. However this is to be expected since it is part of the experience of camping. This characteristic makes flashlights a handy tool that no experienced camper does without.

For the last five or six years my flashlight has been a full-sized *Black & Decker* with a *VersaPak* interchangeable battery system. With its 4.5" rechargeable battery snapped in and a spare for the charger, it was ideal for those like myself who are averse to the disposable battery. It is still serving me well, although after many cycles the original rechargeable batteries have been replaced with more powerful rechargeable batteries that were somewhat pricey to purchase.

But there are new developments on the market. The latest to attract attention is a LED (Light Emitting Diode) Bulb Flashlight. Its solid state LED bulbs last up to 10,000 hours, producing a blue-white light. Conservation of battery power is its real forte since there is no glowing filament as in the traditional flashlight.

The one pictured in this article (with an ink pen for relative size) features the following: three LEDs in a triangular configuration as the light source, 7" by 0.75" black aluminum body, weather resistance, batteries, one-year warranty, and a nylon carrying case for your belt. It is powered by two AA batteries and is advertised as having 150 hours of run time from a set of batteries. Folks, that is 6 days! If you elect to power the flashlight with Duracell Coppertop batteries having a 5-year shelf life, it should be an extended life tool. The *Foresight LED Bulb Flashlight*, model # 76003, SKU # 7596295085 is available from **Target** Stores for about $10.00.

Other LED flashlights are available online at www.amazon.com then search Sporting Goods for LED Flashlights, or at www.greenmountaintraders.com/ledflashlights.html. The flashlights offered for sale at these web sites have from 1 to 12 LEDs. More LEDs will be more expensive and produce brighter light, but will have either a reduction in hours of run time or will need more or larger batteries. Physical size and weight are other considerations before choosing the perfect flashlight. There are also LED clip-on flashlights and LED head-mounted flashlights, championed by those who want light for hands-free activity.

Consider updating your light collection with LED bulb flashlights. You will find them serviceable, efficient and an interesting topic for discussion at club campfires.