

Dark Skies

Dark Skies is an initiative whose general purpose is to protect and promote public health, safety and welfare, the quality of life, and the ability to view the night sky by establishing regulations and a process of review for exterior lighting.

According to [The International Dark-Sky Association](#):

Glare from poorly shielded outdoor lighting is harmful to your health, because it decreases vision by reducing contrast. Blue-rich white light sources are known to increase glare and compromise human vision, especially in the aging eye. These lights create potential road safety problems for motorists and pedestrians alike. In natural settings, blue light at night has been shown to adversely affect wildlife behavior and reproduction. In addition, light pollution wastes energy and money.

Many communities in western North Carolina have adopted Dark Sky ordinances. While there is a misconception that dark sky ordinances are meant to eliminate the use of all outdoor lighting, this is not true. Dark Sky Ordinances are used as guidance for appropriate use of artificial light, providing guidance for properly shielded and unobtrusive lighting.

Dark Sky ordinances are utilized to:

- protect against direct glare and excessive lighting
- prevent light trespass
- promote efficient and cost effective lighting
- provide safe roadways for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians;
- ensure that sufficient lighting can be provided where needed to promote safety and security
- protect and reclaim the ability to view the night sky, and help preserve the quality of life and the tourist experience
- allow for flexibility in the style of lighting fixtures
- provide lighting guidelines