




County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 11, 2022

TO: Consumer Protection Commission

FROM: Rebecca L. Makely, Acting Director 
Department of Cable and Consumer Services

SUBJECT: Consumer Protection Commission Meeting for May 17, 2022

Please find attached the Consumer Protection Commission meeting packet. The next scheduled meeting is **Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room 11** of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia.

Please RSVP with your attendance to Susan Jones by COB on Monday, May 16, 2022, at Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-5877.

Enclosures

cc: Ellicia Seard-McCormick, Deputy County Executive

Susan C. Jones, Consumer Specialist III
Department of Cable and Consumer Services



Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission

April 19, 2022

7:30 PM
Government Center
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035
Chairperson Fee, presiding

Attendance:

Commissioners: Belkowitz, Callender, Fee,
Gulakowski, Hargraves, Kirk, Kratovil, Roark,
Rosier, Springer

Absent:

Commissioners: Svab

Staff:

Rebecca L. Makely, Acting Director
Cable and Consumer Services
Susan C. Jones, Consumer Specialist III
Consumer Affairs Branch
Prescott Barbash, Consumer Specialist I
Consumer Affairs Branch
John W. Burton, Assistant County Attorney
County Attorney Office

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairperson Fee.

Minutes

The minutes for the March 15, 2022, meeting were approved without objection.

Report of the Chairperson

Chairperson Fee had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Report of the Director

Acting Director Makely welcomed the Commission to the in-person meeting. Acting Director Makely informed the Commission that the FY 2023 Advertised Budget Public Hearings took place last week. In addition to emails, calls, and written testimony received, over two hundred speakers participated in these public hearings. The Budget Committee Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 22, 2022, to discuss the hearings. Budget mark-up will be held on Tuesday, April 26, 2022. On Tuesday, May 10, 2022, the FY 2023 Budget will be adopted.

Acting Director Makely let the Commission know Consumer Affairs filled three Consumer Specialist II positions with candidates Lauren Yeung, Prescott Barbash, and Melissa Pickham. The Consumer Specialist I positions will be advertised soon.

Acting Director Makely briefly updated the Commission on the Emergency Taxicab Fuel Surcharge. On April 12, 2022, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) voted unanimously to adopt an

emergency uncodified ordinance for a \$1.00 per-trip taxicab fuel surcharge to be enforced for no more than sixty days in accordance with Virginia Code § 15.2-1427, effective from April 13, 2022, through June 11, 2022, unless rescinded sooner by the BOS. Other surrounding jurisdictions approved similar fuel surcharges. Information on the taxicab fuel surcharge are located in each taxicab and on the Consumer Services Division Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/regulation-licensing/taxicab-servies.

A discussion ensued on the index used to measure the data, average gas prices, effect on Uber or Lift drivers, gas tax holiday, and the ability to revisit if gas prices increase.

Commission Matters

Commissioner Roark had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Belkowitz had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Rosier had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Gulakowski mentioned he received scam calls from the same person and number about owing maintenance fees.

Chairperson Fee was pleased the Commission was able to meet in-person with proper social distancing. He mentioned his trash service went to once a week pick-up but did not notice a significant drop in his quarterly rate.

A discussion ensued on driver retention, recruitment and signing bonuses, the BOS discussion on reestablishing the Fairfax County Solid Waste Authority to address these issues, the use of automated lift trash trucks, and the rental fees for trash containers and associated security deposit.

Commissioner Kirk received scam emails asking he was going by Costco and could this person add items on to the order. He mentioned continued car thefts and now intruders are checking homes for unlocked doors.

Commissioner Kratovil asked if any recruitment efforts had begun for a permanent DCCS Director. Acting Director Makely stated there has been no advertisement or recruitment at this time.

Commissioner Hargraves spoke about several issues. County landfill at Lorton has free mulch, hired a company to remove items from his mother's apartment, but found they would not take items that are scratched and reminded everyone to research this type of service for scams and issue with finding contact information for cable companies and discussed the accessibility to the public.

Commissioner Springer had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Callender mentioned in Amsterdam in 2019 there were electric taxicabs and expects it will be an issue the Commission will explore in the future. He mentioned the upcoming 5th Annual Scam Jam on Friday, April 22, 2022.

Old Business

There was no old business before the Commission.

New Business

1. 2022 Legislation. Consumer Specialist Prescott Barbash presented the following legislative bills reviewed by Consumer Affairs that were approved by the Governor:

- HB 78 Automatic renewal or continuous service offer to consumer; cancellation and online opt-out. Approved by Governor 4/11/22 (effective 7/1/22).
- HB 381 Consumer Data Protection Act; data deletion request. Approved by Governor 4/11/22 (effective 7/1/22).
- HB 402 Landlords, participation; tax credit. Approved by Governor 4/8/22 (effective 7/1/22).
- HB 470 & SB 197 Common interest communities; prohibition on refusal to recognize a licensed real estate broker. Approved by Governor 4/1/22 (effective 7/1/22).
- HB 714 & SB 534 Consumer Data Protection Act; definitions, enforcement, abolishes Consumer Privacy Fund. Approved by Governor 4/11/22 (effective 1/1/23).

A discussion ensued on free trials, the difficulty of canceling memberships, unclear messages that consumers are signing up for a subscription, residents living below the poverty line, real estate agents having the authority to become a registered agent for out of state property owners, and providing consumers more control over the data collected.

Chairperson Fee mentioned a desire to see a change in the Sunshine restrictions to allow more off campus meetings, discussions, and special projects.

Commissioner Kratovil inquired about any updates on Chapter 28.1. Acting Director Makely reminded Commission that changes made by Commissioner Kratovil were previously emailed to the Commission for their review in February. Acting Director Makely has not received any changes from the Commission. Tom Arnold is the new Deputy County Executive for Safety and Security and will meet to review previous work on Chapter 28.1.

Commissioners requested to add Chapter 28.1 to the agenda for May and July. Acting Director Makely requested the Commission review the Chapter and the redline changes prior to the next meeting.

Commissioner Belkowitz inquired about the process. Acting Director Makely stated once the Commission moves forward with the changes, CPC would make a motion to advertise a public hearing. The CPC would hold the public hearing. The CPC would make a motion to recommend the proposed amendments for BOS approval. Staff would present the recommendations to the BOS and they would make a motion to advertise the public hearing and then hold the hearing.

Chairperson Fee agreed to put Chapter 28.1 on the agenda for the May meeting after Regulation and Licensing 101 presentation and further review at the July meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY
CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION
May 17, 2022 AGENDA**

Call to Order by the Chairperson (7:30 PM)

Remote Participation Motions

Minutes

- Approval of the draft April 19, 2022, meeting minutes

Report of the Chairperson

Report of the Director

Commission Matters

Old Business

New Business

- Regulation and Licensing 101
- Chapter 28.1

General Interest

- Consumer Protection Commission Calendar
- Consumer Protection Commission Membership
- Consumer Affairs Statistics
- Community Outreach
- Consumer Resources

CPC Calendar

Consumer Protection Commission
2022 Planning Calendar
May 17, 2022

- January 18
 - Nomination of Officers
 - 2022 Meeting Calendar
 - 2022 Items of Interest

- February 15
 - Consumer Affairs 101

- March 15
 - 2022 Elections

- April 19
 - 2022 Legislative Review

- May 17
 - Regulation and Licensing 101
 - Chapter 28.1

- June 21
 - Police Civilian Review Panel Presentation

- July 19
 - FY 2022 Annual Report
 - Chapter 28.1

- August 16
 - Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP)

- September 20
 - Silver Shield Task Force Presentation

- October 18
 - Bitcoin/Cryptocurrency

- November 15
 - Nomination of Officers

- December 20
 -

CPC Membership

Name

Harold G. Belkowitz
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

Wes Callender
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

John Fee (Chairperson)
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

Denis Gulakowski
(Vice-Chairperson)
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

Dirck A. Hargraves
Appt. Expires 7/31/2023

Dennis D. Kirk
Appt. Expires 7/31/2022

Jason J. Kratovil
Appt. Expires: 7/31/2024

Michael J. Roark
Appt. Expires 7/31/2023

Jacqueline Rosier (Secretary)
Appt. Expires 7/31/2022

Dr. Maurice B. Springer
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

Mr. Paul Svab
Appt. Expires 7/31/2024

Staff

Rebecca L. Makely, Acting Director
Department of Cable and Consumer Services
703-324-5947
rebecca.makely@fairfaxcounty.gov

Susan Jones, Consumer Specialist III
Consumer Affairs Branch
703-324-5877
susan.jones@fairfaxcounty.gov

Main number: 703-222-8435
Fax number: 703-653-1310

CAB Statistics



Consumer Affairs Branch
Monthly Summary - All Activities
April 2022

	Current Month		Fiscal Year-to-Date		Prior Fiscal YTD	
Cases Received	61		876		751	
Cases Closed	42		626		652	
Favorable	25	60%	358	57%	361	55%
Unfavorable	4	10%	59	9%	52	8%
Invalid	0	0%	21	3%	23	4%
Other	13	30%	188	30%	216	33%
Total (Checks column totals)	42	100%	626	100%	652	100%
Advice Inquires (closed)	351		3275		4053	
Case Inquires over 90+days (open)	28		190		192	
Amount Received	\$27,881.00		\$470,572.00		\$330,111.00	

CLOSED COMPLAINT CATEGORIES

	FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE	% FYTD	PRIOR FISCAL YTD	% PRIOR FYTD
Housing		29%	Tenant Landlord	31%
Tenant-Landlord		21%	Cable Television (Regulated)	11%
Automotive		12%	Housing - Service	10%
Internet Sales		7%	Automotive - Towing	9%
Retail		7%	Retail Stores	5%
Other		24%	Other	34%

Community Outreach

Outreach Event Calendar May 2022

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	# of Guests	Event Time	Staff
5/17/2022	Consumer Booth	John Marshall Library 6209 Rose Hill Drive Alexandria, VA		12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	SCJ LY
5/20/2022	Consumer Connection Legal Services of Northern Virginia	Fairfax County Government 12000 Government Center Pkwy Fairfax, VA		11:00 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.	SCJ
5/22/2022	55+ Wellness & Safety Expo Booth	Vienna Community Center 120 Cherry Street SE Vienna, VA		1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	SCJ LY

Outreach Event Calendar

June 2022

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	# of Guests	Event Time	Staff
6/27/2022	Consumer Connection	Fairfax County Government 12000 Government Center Pkwy Fairfax, VA		11:00 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.	SCJ

Consumer Resources

Resource Items

Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer>

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/consumer>

Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyconsumer/>

Fairfax County Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

[Fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/)

Ways to Stay Informed About Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/>

Ways to Donate and Help During COVID-19

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/2020/03/25/ways-to-donate-and-help-during-covid-19/>

What to Know About Tenant-Landlord Rights During COVID-19

<https://fairfaxcountyemergency.wpcomstaging.com/2020/11/17/what-to-know-about-tenant-landlord-rights-during-covid-19/>

DCCS Operating Status

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/status>

Your Community, You're Connected: Communication Association

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/channel-16/your-community-youre-connected>

Consumer Connection: Regulation and Licensing 101 (April 25, 2022)

<https://bit.ly/3LijzPq>

Information Items

Fairfax County allows \$1 surcharge for taxi rides to offset high gas prices

Taxi drivers in Fairfax County will get some help at the pump. [[More](#)]

Fairfax Co. OKs \$1 surcharge for taxis amid spiking gas prices

With all the pain at the pump, taxi drivers in Fairfax County, Virginia, are getting a little help amid spiking gas prices. [[More](#)]

\$1 Taxi Fuel Surcharge Approved Temporarily In Fairfax County

A \$1 surcharge was requested by taxicab companies as drivers have absorbed the cost of higher gas prices. [[More](#)]

Step-by-Step Guide to Buying the Right Light Bulb

LED? CFL? E26? A19? Warm white? Cool daylight? The choices can be daunting [[More](#)]

Fairfax County allows \$1 surcharge for taxi rides to offset high gas prices

[David Taube](#) April 13, 2022 at 9:00am



A taxicab in a parking lot (staff photo by David Taube)

Taxi drivers in Fairfax County will get some help at the pump.

The county's Board of Supervisors approved a **measure** yesterday (Tuesday) to let taxicabs tack on a \$1 fuel surcharge for each trip, following a staff recommendation and a private company's request for twice that amount.

"The \$1.00 per-trip emergency taxicab fuel surcharge will provide immediate relief to the taxicab drivers who are suffering an economic hardship from increased fuel costs," county staff wrote in a memo.

The measure doesn't apply to ride-hailing services such as Lyft and Uber, which introduced their own surcharge policies on March 16 that go entirely to drivers, though they were 55 cents per trip or less.

Old Dominion Transportation Group, which owns Fairfax Yellow Cab, Fairfax Red Top Cab and Springfield Yellow Cab, requested an emergency gas surcharge of \$2 on March 17 for drivers licensed in Fairfax County, with 100% of the surcharge paid directly to drivers, county staff said in a memo.

One taxicab driver said his fuel costs used to be around \$25 per fill-up. Now, it's as high as \$40. As of yesterday (Tuesday), the average price in the county was nearly \$4.20 per gallon, the auto service provider AAA reported.

Cab drivers, who are independent contractors, average nearly seven trips per day, according to a county staff memo. Cabs have been able to charge \$3.50 initially for a ride and 36 cents for every one-sixth of a mile traveled. That means customers taking the average trip of approximately 8 miles face a fare of nearly \$21, not including a tip.

The private sector and some nearby jurisdictions have also taken steps to provide temporary relief. D.C. approved a measure on March 16 for 120 days, and Prince William County's relief lasts for 60 days.

Fairfax County's \$1 fuel surcharge starts today (Wednesday) and extends for two months through June 11, but it can be canceled before that date.

Facing competition for customers with mobile-app-driven services, the number of taxicabs in the county have drastically decreased, from 820 taxi drivers in 2013 to 200 in 2020. Old Dominion Transportation Group operates most of the taxicabs in the county, accounting for 130 of 150 vehicles now in service.

Fairfax Co. OKs \$1 surcharge for taxis amid spiking gas prices

With all the pain at the pump, taxi drivers in Fairfax County, Virginia, are getting a little help amid spiking gas prices.

The county's Board of Supervisors on Tuesday approved a measure to let them add a \$1 surcharge for every trip.

That \$1 will go directly to drivers. It went into effect Wednesday and runs until June 11.

"The \$1.00 per-trip emergency taxicab fuel surcharge will provide immediate relief to the taxicab drivers who are suffering an economic hardship from increased fuel costs," the board said in its agenda notes. "This increase may also help retain current drivers and recruit new drivers, supporting the County's Strategic Outcome Area: Economic Opportunity."

The surcharge doesn't apply to Lyft or Uber.

Table 3: Comparison of Taxicab Rates in Local Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Initial Charge	Mileage Charge	First Mile Charge	Fuel Surcharge	Average Trip Charge
Fairfax County	\$3.50	\$0.36 per 1/6 mile	\$5.66	\$0.00	\$20.78
Fairfax County Proposal	\$3.50	\$0.36 per 1/6 mile	\$5.66	\$0.50	\$21.28
Arlington County	\$3.50	\$0.36 per 1/6 mile	\$5.66	<i>\$1.00 pending approval May 2022, effective June 1, 2022</i>	\$21.78
City of Alexandria	\$3.00	\$0.36 per 1/6 mile	\$5.16	<i>\$1.00 pending approval on 3/29/22</i>	\$21.28
Prince William County	\$3.00	\$0.20 per 1/10 mile	\$5.00	\$1.00 approved 3/15/22 for 60 days	\$20.00
Montgomery County, MD	\$4.00	\$0.50 per 1/4 mile	\$6.00	No request by industry	\$20.00
Washington, DC	\$3.50	\$0.36 per 1/6 mile	\$5.66	\$1.00 approved 3/16/22 for 120 days	\$21.78
Uber	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0.45-\$0.55 approved 3/16/22 for 60 days	N/A
Lyft	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$0.55 approved 3/21/22 for 60 days	N/A

Note: Average trip length is approximately eight (8) miles as provided by company data on March 21, 2022.

Taxi rates in the D.C. area courtesy the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Old Dominion Transportation Group, Inc. — which owns Fairfax Yellow Cab, Fairfax Red Top Cab, and Springfield Yellow Cab — had requested an emergency gas surcharge of \$2 in March.

D.C. had already added a \$1 surcharge for taxi rides.

In Prince William County, base taxi cab rates went up \$1 on March 15. That rate will be in effect for 60 days.

\$1 Taxi Fuel Surcharge Approved Temporarily In Fairfax County

A \$1 surcharge was requested by taxicab companies as drivers have absorbed the cost of higher gas prices.



Emily Leayman, Patch Staff

Posted Wed, Apr 13, 2022 at 11:44 am ET

Reply



A \$1 taxicab fuel surcharge will be in effect for 60 days in Fairfax County in response to higher gas prices. (Shutterstock)

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA — Fairfax County will temporarily have a \$1 fuel surcharge on taxicab trips to account for increased gas prices.

The Board of Supervisors approved the fuel surcharge Tuesday in response to a request from the taxicab industry. The temporary surcharge will be in effect from April 13 to June 11.

Old Dominion Transportation Group, Inc. which runs about 130 of the 150 taxicabs in the county, had originally requested a \$2 surcharge, but county staff recommended a \$1 surcharge instead. In the request, the taxicab company cited increased gas prices that drivers absorb the costs of. Gas is a non-reimbursed expense for drivers, and taxicab rates are based on the gas price of \$3.66 per gallon from July 2014.

"We have seen some decline slightly since we submitted our board item on March 30," said Rebecca Makely, acting director of the Department of Cable and Consumer Services. "Prices have come down some, but it still would provide rate relief to the taxicab drivers which currently right now are experiencing higher fuel price than what the current taxicab rates are based on when they were last increased."

Makely noted that the surcharge does not apply to ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft, as Fairfax County does not regulate their prices. Uber and Lyft have \$0.45 or \$0.55 surcharges.

Gas prices peaked at \$4.337 on March 11, according to AAA data for the Northern Virginia region. The current average for Northern Virginia is \$4.050, which is lower than \$4.309 a month ago but significantly more than \$2.793 a year ago.

Fairfax County's temporary measure joins Prince William County's \$1 surcharge for 60 days that started March 15 and DC's \$1 surcharge for 120 days from March 16. Arlington County and the City of Alexandria could have a \$1 surcharge pending approval.

Step-by-Step Guide to Buying the Right Light Bulb

LED? CFL? E26? A19? Warm white? Cool daylight? The choices can be daunting

by John Waggoner, [AARP](#), April 12, 2022



VVOEVALE/GETTY IMAGES

If you've ever gone to a big-box hardware store to get a light bulb, you may have glanced down the vast length of the lighting aisle and decided that it's not such a bad thing to go to bed at dusk and wake up at dawn.

But don't be intimidated by the hundreds of choices you have among the rows and rows of light bulbs. Technology has changed bulbs for the better: They last far longer than they used to, they can produce different intensities of light, and some can even be turned on and off by a cellphone, motion or the sunrise. Finding the right one just takes getting used to a few criteria old bulbs didn't offer. Buying the wrong one can mean yet another trip to the store — or, worse, a set of bulbs you can't use.

Types of light bulbs

Not so very long ago, if you wanted a light bulb, you bought an incandescent bulb, the kind Thomas Edison created for commercial consumption. You can still buy old-school incandescent light bulbs, which have a filament whose brightness depends on the amount of power running through it. But now you have other choices:

- **Light-emitting diode (LED)** bulbs were once the most expensive choice, but their prices have fallen significantly. You can get some off-brand LEDs with the equivalent brightness of a 60-watt incandescent for \$1 or less; name-brand bulbs typically sell for more. LEDs can last about 25,000 hours, compared with about 750 hours for incandescent bulbs.
- **Compact fluorescent lights (CFL)**, those twisty fluorescent bulbs, are also more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs. They can last about 8,000 hours and cost about \$2 to \$3 apiece. Because they contain small amounts of mercury, CFLs will need to be recycled. Some stores, such as Home Depot and Lowe's, will recycle CFLs for free.
- **Halogen lights** are very bright bulbs that are typically used for lighting small areas, such as kitchen counters. They tend to last about 2,500 hours, and burn even hotter than incandescent bulbs, so wait for one to cool off before you touch it.

The amount you pay for a single bulb, however, is just part of the cost. You also need to take into account how often you'll need to replace the bulbs and how much power you'll use to run the light. According to the Consumer Federation of America, over 10 years the total cost — that's the cost of the bulb and the power to run it — of using a 60-watt incandescent bulb would add up to about \$70. (That cost also includes buying several replacement incandescent bulbs over the decade.) A CFL costs about \$20 over the same span of time, and an LED costs an average of \$13.70. The average house has more than 20 light bulbs, meaning that switching to LEDs from incandescents could save you about \$1,100 over the 10 years, or a bit more than \$100 a year.

Bulb brightness

Not so very long ago, your main consideration in buying a light bulb was how many watts you needed: a 100-watt bulb for reading, for example, or a 60-watt bulb for a table lamp.

A watt, however, is a measure of how much energy it takes to power a bulb — not how bright the bulb is. (It's named after James Watt, inventor of the steam engine.) Many newer bulbs are marked in lumens, which is the amount of light a particular bulb emits, and that's because most new light bulbs, such as LEDs, use much less power than an incandescent bulb.

For example, a traditional 60-watt incandescent bulb emits 900 lumens of light and uses 60 watts of power. An LED light that emits 900 lumens of light uses just 15 watts of power. Here's a table of how watts on incandescent bulbs convert to lumens.

Watts	Lumens
40 W	600 lm
60 W	900 lm
75 W	1125 lm
100 W	1500 lm
150 W	2250 lm

Source: RapidTables.com

What kind of warmth?

Old-style incandescent lights had one shade of white, unless you were partial to colored party lights. New bulbs — even incandescents — have a variety of color warmth, which is measured in a scale of 1,000 to 10,000 degrees Kelvin. (It's named after William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, who discovered absolute zero — the lowest possible temperature.)

According to bulb manufacturer Westinghouse, Kelvin temperatures for commercial and residential lighting applications fall somewhere on a scale from 2000K (warm white) to 6500K (daylight):

- Bulbs in the 2700K range are warm white, considered cozy and inviting, and are good for living rooms and kitchens.
- Bulbs in the 3100K to 4500K range are a cool white, sometimes with a tinge of blue. They're often used for bathrooms, vanities and outdoor lighting.
- Bulbs in the 5000K range are called "cool daylight," and are best used for basements, garages and security lighting.

Location, location, location

Unless you enjoy climbing ladders, you'll want the longest-lasting bulbs in hard-to-reach places, such as the top of a stairwell. Here again, LEDs would be your first choice. If you decide to use an LED light for that floodlight mounted under the rafters, make sure you choose one that's made for exterior use.

And there's no need to be heroic about replacing a light bulb. If you don't feel confident about climbing up to replace a hard-to-reach bulb, get a relative, neighbor or handyman to do the job for you.

If your bulb will reside in an enclosed location, such as a hall light with a glass cover that fits flush to the ceiling, or an outdoor light that's protected from the weather by a glass globe, you'll need a bulb marked as usable for enclosed fixtures. LEDs and CFLs

don't last long in enclosed fixtures, because the heat buildup will fry some of their components.

If you're planning on putting a bulb where it may become damp, such as a bathroom or basement, be sure to get a bulb that's suited for damp locations. Use outdoor damp-rated lights for porch lights that are out of the rain or wind, and also on decks with an overhang that does not allow water to seep through (otherwise you need wet-rated bulbs).

What kind of features?

Traditional light bulbs had one feature: You put it into a socket, flipped a switch, and it produced light. Today, however, you can buy lights that:

- **Dim.** Not exactly a new feature, but you can buy dimmable LED and incandescent lights. Most CFL bulbs are not dimmable — and that will be marked on the package.
- **Listen.** Some bulbs are now Wi-Fi- or Bluetooth-enabled, meaning you can turn them on and off (or dim them) or even change them to a wide variety of colors with a smartphone or smart speaker.
- **Wake up.** Some outdoor lights can now turn off when the sun rises and on when the sun sets.
- **Keep watch.** Some bulbs now have motion sensors, which will startle trespassers and wildlife alike.

One final note: Light bulbs, in particular halogen lights, come in a remarkable number of sizes and shapes. Fortunately, the classic pear-shaped, screw-in light bulb we're all familiar with and you're most likely replacing is easy to identify on store shelves. On the packaging, look for "E26" or "medium base," which indicates the bulb will screw into a standard threaded socket, and "A19," which signals the bulb is the size and shape of a standard bulb. If you are in need of anything other than a standard E26/A19 light bulb and want to save another trip to the bulb aisle, bring the bulb you plan to replace with you to the store.