



SUSTAINABLE LIGHTING AND SOUND GUIDE

PRE-PRODUCTION

With your producer or production manager, gently enquire with your venue as to their energy supplier, and ask if they would be open to switching to a 100% renewable provider.

- Greenpeace has recently ranked the top renewable energy providers in Australia by state, which can be found [here](#). The venue may not decide to change immediately, but if enough artists start a conversation, they will get the message!
- This may also be a chance to start a conversation about the venue updating their lighting rig to more energy-efficient equipment, which will also save them money in the long run.

If feasible, request digital scripts instead of hard copies. Alternatively, ask your stage manager for double-sided scripts that have page breaks for new scenes/acts. That way, if major edits occur, the entire script does not have to be reprinted.

Design your lighting rig to maximise the coverage and effect from minimal lights. Try to use contrast instead of brightness in your lighting designs to reduce the wattage required.

Maximise the use of existing venue lighting and avoid hiring equipment wherever possible to reduce transport emissions.

- For short seasons (1-2 weeks), your emissions footprint will generally be lower by using existing, potentially less energy-efficient fixtures, than it will if you hire and transport equipment.

Where you do have to hire equipment, try as much as possible to use suppliers who have environmental policies and are local, to reduce travel emissions.

PRODUCTION

Preference low energy bulbs and use as many LED lighting fixtures as possible. LEDs offer several environmental benefits including a longer lifespan, significantly lower power requirements, dynamic design and usage (so fewer fixtures and gels are required), and a lower heat output (so you don't have to turn the air con on to cool the venue down).

Preference self-powered speakers (where applicable), which are more energy-efficient.

Use rechargeable nickel-metal hydride batteries rather than disposable alkaline ones.

Try not to use cable ties, electrical tape, or gaffa. Instead, use bungee cords, clamps, velcro straps, or sash ties. See our [Sustainable Materials Guide](#) for more information.

- Chat with the set designer for ways you could collaborate to hide cables or run them safely without the need for tape or visible cable traps.

If possible, use a digital rather than an analogue sound desk. Use low-wattage and energy-efficient products e.g. Harman Crown XLS, Dobson Sounds pulse-width modulation systems.

If the show will have a touring life, create two show files to accommodate venues with LED fixtures and those without.

Turn it off if it's not in active use. This includes lighting rigs, PSUs, three-phase power, dimmer racks, sound desks, and speakers.

- Consider designing your AV set-up so all power switches are easily accessible, particularly with any rigged equipment.
- Switch off discharge lighting between the end of the reset/rig check and the half-hour call before the show starts, and between matinee and evening performances. The National Theatre (UK) has done this and seen no ill effect on equipment operation.

POST-PRODUCTION

Lighting gels are made from petroleum and not recyclable. Ensure you file them away for future use or find community groups or schools who may be able to reuse your old gels and practicals after the season.

Ensure you recycle all batteries and electrical equipment appropriately at the end of the season. Remember that not all e-waste can generally be disposed of at the same location. See our [Production Disposal Directory](#) for more information.

SOURCES

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