

# Light Up the Sky

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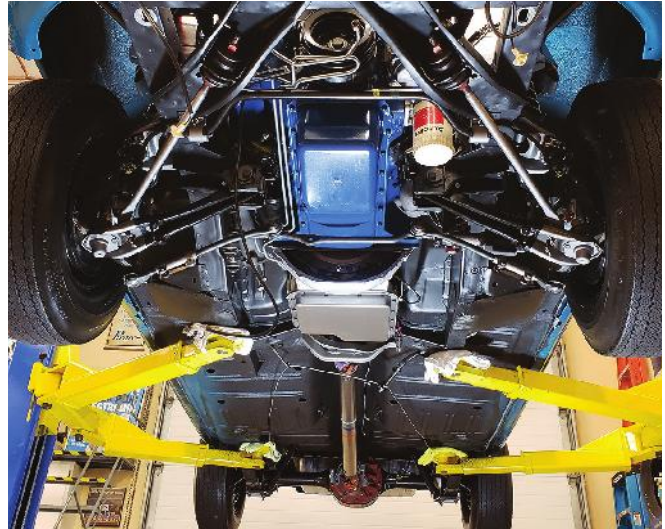
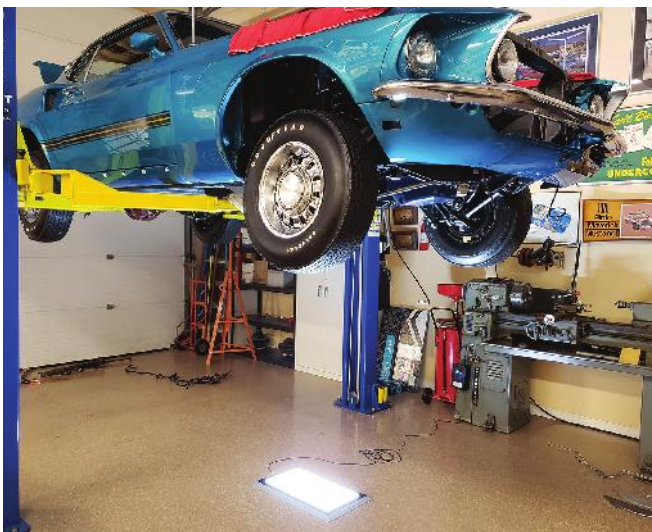


For those who have not been paying attention recently, the lighting industry is going through an incredible once-in-a-lifetime revolution of change and technology updates. Everywhere you look, you can see LED lights replacing traditional incandescent bulbs that have been in use for as long as we can remember. And this is something that extends to all areas of our lives. If nothing else, it seems that LED lights are now the top choice to use due to three reasons, at least in my opinion—they last longer, they use less energy, and they can be transformed into just about any shape or size of lighting requirement that you can think of. No longer are you limited by the size of certain types of bulbs and the select wattages that were being manufactured.

A recent example can be found here in the city of Phoenix, which is in the process of replacing all of its 100,000 street lights. Previously, they used large, traditional-style bulbs that had to be replaced periodically. The LED upgrade is expensive but there is an estimated annual savings of \$1 million in maintenance costs and \$2.8M in energy costs. Wasn't much to think about when you can do something like that, so the city and taxpayers are happy to fund a project like this. You see this all over the USA right now.

It's similar in today's car world. When you are driving at night, you can see the use of LED lights and the brightness of the headlights, along with the different shapes. We weren't able to do that before unless you had a six-foot light bar installed on the roof of your car or added extra driving lights on the front.

As the owner of an automotive shop, the single most important aspect of this LED revolution is having the ability to use all types of LED lights in my workspace. I love the options available to us now. I would hope that most of you reading this have upgraded your drop lights, flashlights, and other lighting accessories to the convenience of LED lights. I certainly have my favorites to reach for.



Who remembers years ago when you got too close to that 100-watt drop light and it burned your hand? Happened to me many times. Or worse yet, just as you're working on something, the drop light falls, the bulb stops working, and you don't have replacement bulbs handy. This happened to me many times, forcing me to run back to the house to swap out a living room bulb so I could finish what I was working on and later pretending that I didn't know why the living room light was out again.

When working in a shop, I have a few basic requirements. Some of those include a dependable air supply, quality hand tools, heat and air conditioning for a comfortable working environment, and lighting. If you can't see what you are doing, how can you do a good job or be efficient and precise. Imagine if you went to your local dentist and he didn't have good lighting as he started drilling in your mouth. No, thank you. I know we are not dentists here, but still this is a similar situation.

One of the latest products I discovered is a flat LED light panel that you can lay under your car. If you think about it, lights in the shop are overhead, so even if you have a car lift you are going to have dark unlit areas under the car—and that's exactly where you are working and what you want to see. Most of us have had this experience. DCI Lighting sells a new product, so I tried it out over the past few weeks and I have to say it's impressive. Some of the features include the ability (via touch controller) to control the brightness of the light pad by turning it up or down for your specific needs. You can walk on the pad or drop tools on it, and it's sealed so it's resistant to oils, water, and fuel spills. It can actually withstand 15 tons being driven over it. In other words, it's built for just about anything. If you are in the market for something like this, I suggest you look them up on the Internet under [www.dci-lighting.com](http://www.dci-lighting.com).

I'm always happy to see new products that can make our shop lives easier. This is definitely one of those.