

Expected Life of a Photocontrol

The life span and reliability of any photocontrol is entirely dependent upon utilizing the appropriate options for the given application. For example, one wouldn't use a unit with no surge protection in high lightning areas, such as Florida and the Gulf Coast.

The two basic photocontrol types fall into two categories, locking-type or twist lock, and direct wire-in controls.

Locking-type or Twist Lock

These units are typically used for street lighting or area lighting and have a direct 3-prong plug, standard, which is universal and interchangeable with all other twist lock models or brands. Those units made for the commercial market, such as, residential lighting, security lighting, etc., can be of utility-grade quality or low cost, questionable quality,

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dependent upon two factors: 1) how price driven the buyer is and, 2) where the units are purchased. For the most part you're going to see at the big box outlets, such as, Home Depot and Loews, units that are low cost and "bare bones" designed for the least demanding applications. Utility-grade twist lock controls, on the otherhand such as the type that we make, are available exclusively through

electrical distributors. These units conform to the ANSI Standard and must perform to a set of specifications over a long period of time.

Direct Wire-in Controls

These units are generally used by contractors in the C&I markets, and like the twist lock controls, their performance is directly proportional to their pricing. If you want good performance for at least 5 years, always use a brand name control through electrical distribution, where you are assured of reliable performance with a replacement if the product fails to operate properly. More often than not, buying the least expensive photocontrol you can find, will guarantee a shorter life. When you consider the cost of replacement, time and other factors, the extra \$2 or \$3 savings is never worth the trouble.