

Publication of the National Street Rod Association



LED Taillights How-To

...let 'em know you're sharing their space



priving an early model vehicle in a modern world is a pretty cool thing to do, but it doesn't come without some risks. One of them is that the majority of the today's drivers are accustomed to seeing huge, extremely bright taillights at or near eye level on the vehicle in front of them... we're giving them taillights that are small, not real bright, and

The LED taillight conversion kit as supplied by Lambert Enterprises contained all of the hardware and easy to follow instructions for a simple, quick installation.



normally closer to the ground than is usual in today's world. This may not be too bad when traffic is moderate and under normal weather conditions, but add the increased number of vehicles at rush hour and a bit of precipitation, and those tiny taillights are only a little more effective than a candle in a windstorm to those around you in their late-model land yachts, especially those riding high up



With the taillight lens and gaskets removed, the first step is to remove the wiring, including the fiber washer and spring, from the bulb socket.



Next, the tabs that the stock taillight lens mounting screws thread into are drilled out to 3/16'' dia.

in the air in SUVs and trucks of all kinds.

This is precisely what prompted Ron Lambert to come up with a solution 15-years ago that lets us keep the look of the old-timey taillights, but gain the effectiveness of modern lighting technology. Ron's approach is

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The supplied nylon stand-offs are installed on the LED card, spaced to align with the lens mounting holes.

Install the LED card and install the threaded rod through the lens mounting holes and into the nylon stand-offs. Now make the electrical connections per the instructions.





The final step is to place the lens and gaskets over the threaded rods and while holding the lens firmly, remove one rod and replace it with a supplied screw. Then, remove the other threaded rod and replace it with the other supplied screw.



If the turn signals do not operate correctly, a low load flasher (LE-TSFL) from Lambert Enterprises can be used to remedy the problem. Our system did not require one.

to adapt a cluster of LED's (light emitting diode) to original taillight housings, be they Ford, GM, Mopar, or what have you... even custom-made automotive lights and motorcycles.

LED technology is so highly regarded that we are now seeing it used for taillights in new personal sized vehicles, on big rigs, and emergency equipment. Millions of traffic signals all across the country are being converted to LED's as well, and if you've seen one you'll know it because the lights are visible for blocks instead of for a few hundred feet.

Ron told us that "following a friend's street rod equipped with stock taillights made me think there had to be a better way," and as they say, the rest is history. Ron's first products were made up for his cruisin' buddies, and when he introduced his LED taillight conversion kits to the rodding world at the 1996 NSRA Street Rod Nationals New Products area, his development work was rewarded with the coveted "Best New Safety Related Product of the Year" award. The product caught on almost instantly and that has spawned a wide range of associated products from special flashers and a cruise control relay to work with the LED taillights, to custom units that can be flush molded into the body.

The kit we got from Lambert Enterprises was everything promised, and the instructions took us through the installation with ease. We read them completely before starting the conversion on our stock '33 Ford taillights, and the process went without a hitch. Converting two taillights took less than an hour, and everything worked the first time we tried them. Wow – what a difference.

Ron cautioned us before hand that we may need to incorporate one of his special flasher units, but that was not the case. Had we needed to incorporate the flasher, it would have added only a few minutes to the project.

We've already gotten positive feed-back from our fellow street rodders, so hopefully other drivers will notice the brighter tail and stop lights as well when we're sharing the road with motorists not used to our more diminutive rear lights. At least we know we've taken the steps to help them see us better. ss

Source Guide

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