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## BOULDER DAILY CAMERA

### Governor: Market forces already are improving efficiency

**By Todd Neff, Camera Staff Writer**  
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Gov. Bill Owens has vetoed legislation that would have required 14 products to use less electricity starting in 2008, including illuminated exit signs, commercial ice-makers, torchiere lamps and swimming-pool pumps.

The bill had passed the state House 40-21 and the Senate 23-12. It was sponsored by Rep. Alice Borodkin and Sen. Ken Gordon, both Denver Democrats.

In a letter sent to the state Legislature on Thursday, Owens said he vetoed House Bill 1162 because market forces already were improving energy efficiency and because he believed the legislation would increase costs to consumers and businesses. He also said he believed such standards should be implemented nationally, and not state-by-state, for smoother commerce.

"Market forces provide powerful, and often unpredictable, incentives for consumer goods to become more efficient, and less expensive," Owens wrote. "They do so, in most cases, without the heavy hand of government mandates and central planning."

Boulder's Southwest Energy Efficiency Project wrote the legislation based on a similar bill that passed in California. The project estimates that the standards would have saved businesses and consumers in Colorado more than \$500 million on their energy bills by 2020 and would have lowered peak electricity demand by 215 megawatts, roughly the maximum output of Xcel Energy's Valmont Station.

Although more efficient products often cost more initially, electricity savings can close the gap quickly, said Howard Geller, the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project's executive director.

Light-emitting-diode exit signs last for more than a decade and burn about \$20 less electricity each year than incandescent signs. LED signs also don't require the labor needed to change burned-out bulbs.

"There's tremendous cost-savings over the life of more effective products," Geller said.

He said the bill had been introduced three successive years and changes had addressed initial concerns of manufacturers and retailers.

California, Connecticut, Maryland and New Jersey have standards similar to those vetoed Thursday; Arizona passed state standards last week, Geller said.

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