

By Darryl Conner

I have a heavy duty 4 ft. Home Depot fixture, about 5 yrs old (appears to be exactly like the last fixture listed). I've always gotten decent readings from my ZooMed 5.0 tubes. measured at 11-12 inches, with 2 tubes I get 35-40-ish consistently, even with a 2 yr old tube in 1 slot & 1 yr old tube in the other. I've foolishly advised folks to get just any fixture, and put good tubes in it. Then I've gone to their homes & tested for them, and gotten crappy reading on brand new tubes, like 15 or less. I took those tubes home & tested in my fixture, and got good readings again. I finally decided that all fixtures are not created equal. I posted on the Meter Owners e-group and was told to use an electronic ballast. So I started recommending to people to get electronic ballast fixtures. I just tested one recently, and she was only getting 15-18 at 12 inches. It turns out that the ZooMed tubes are T-12 and the electronic ballasted fixtures only come in T-8. (Maybe you can get a replacement T-12 ballast

So...my point is...we should not only be documenting test results for different tubes, but different types/brands of fluorescent fixtures as well. All of the readings below were taken using the same two brand new ZooMed Reptisun 5.0 tubes, in the same socket, in the same spot in the same room. Everything is identical except the fixtures. All were purchased (and 2 models returned..LOL) at Home Depot, and the brand name on all fixtures is "LITHONIA LIGHTING". I don't have a clue what all the numbers indicate, but will list them just as they were on the box. All are 4 ft. and are fully assembled except the last one, which requires simple assembly (simple once you figure how to do it, anyway). When I returned the 2 crappy ones, I got an additional *good one* and assembled & tested it, too...so you will see 2 set of results for the better fixture. This was tested with the SolarMeter 6.2, with 2 tubes in place, so the readings are for the combined UVB of 2 tubes. Another variable that comes into play is the size of the reflector above the tubes. The cheaper one had a very narrow reflector, and the higher end one had a very wide reflector.

Distance UVB in microwatts (uW/cm2)

Shoplight (\$7.97) 1233 747752

12" --14
11" --16
6" --28

Worklight-for residential use (\$18.48) 1241 436129

12" --20
11" --24
6" --42

Premier Worklight-heavy duty-fully wired (\$19.99) 1271 267393 (needs assembly)

12" --34/33
11" --38/36
6" --62/60

This fixture has the ballast in clear view until you assemble. Info on the ballast says:
Advance RM 2535-TP Rapid Start Ballast 120 watts, 60 hertz
Technical info-1-800-372-3331

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