

## Frequently Asked Questions

# Mercury and Metal Halide Lamp Operation

### *What happens when mercury lamps are operated on metal halide ballasts, and vice versa?*

Generally speaking, mercury lamps must be operated on mercury ballasts and metal halide lamps must be operated on metal halide ballasts. Failure to do so will compromise performance of the lamp system.

Consequences of operating mercury lamps on metal halide ballasts:

- Higher LPW
- Shorter Lamp Life
- Ballast Incompatibility

Consequences of operating metal halide lamps on mercury ballasts:

- Lower LPW
- Shorter Lamp Life
- Poor Lumen Maintenance
- Ballast Incompatibility

Some ballast manufacturers no longer make mercury ballasts. They make metal halide ballasts and label them for both mercury and metal halide. For example, if a ballast is labeled for both 400W mercury and 400W metal halide, it will have H33 and M59 on its label.