

The U.S. Makes them Tough

by Frederick Wickert

The winter of 2010-2011 in the Catskill Mountains has been a tough one with more than usual snow fall. In early February this year there was a big Nor'easter which began with warm temperatures and rain fall. The rain changed to freezing rain and sleet and then to a wet, heavy snow. Near the end, the temperatures again warmed up and we went back to freezing rain before the storm moved on. It left a mix of a foot and a half of wet, heavy snow filled with ice. It was tough stuff.

On my garage I have a security light mounted on the front below the peak and another just like it, mounted on the left rear corner of the garage. These are called sodium vapor lights.

When we have snow storms, my garage roof is what I like to call self cleaning. I say this because when it gets a few inches of snow on it, the snow begins to slide downwards from the peak. When it gets four to six feet down it suddenly breaks loose with great speed and all comes sliding off the roof to the ground.

During this snow storm it was the same with a difference. The ice contained within the snow became destructive and for the first time ever, it took down the gutter pipe on the attached shed roof. It also broke and tore down the shield of the security light on the rear corner of the garage, broke the bulb and took it down too. It left only the filament of the bulb. The gutter pipe of the neighbor across the road came down from the front of his house in the same storm.

To my amazement the bulb continued to light. When it became dark enough the light came on and remained on all night. It continued to do so until now, surviving two more snow storms as well.

I have never seen such a tough light bulb. I have shown it to others and they too have never seen such a thing. I took a photo of the one like it on the front of the garage, one of the broken light in the day time, one of the broken bulb itself and one of the lighted filament at night. I examined the bulb to see what company made the bulb and could only find the markings, "Made in U.S.A."

It is now March 9th just after another Nor'easter dumped more than a foot more snow on us, again mixed with freezing rain and sleet. The garage roof has cleared itself and the light filament continues to light every night.

The U.S.A. sure makes them tough.

