

# *Gear Review Blogger*

*Video Production Gear that Works!*

## *Barger-Lite Review*

Barger-Lite reminds me of the old adage, "Build a better mouse trap, and the world will beat a path to your door".



Barger on the set of Burn Notice

Ed Barger has been in the business for many years, and as a cameraman, he saw the need for a high-wattage soft light that could be used on location, without having to bother with wiring up a distro box, or renting a generator truck.

In the late 1990's he came up with the "Barger-Lite" for use on his shoots. Soon he started selling them to other interested DP's

and cameramen, and by 2005, making Barger-Lites became his full time job.

I attribute this phenomenon to two factors, the Barger-Lite's ease of use, and the quality of light that it gives you.

The Barger-Lite comes in two models, a three- bulb unit, and a six- bulb unit. I have used the three- bulb "DV" model for years with great success, and this review is of the new V2 six- bulb version.

The V2, six bulb Barger-Lite is about 20" square, and 5" deep, with a yoke for mounting and aiming the light. It has six sockets on the front for FCM type bulbs, a safety grill, and a metal cover that further protects the bulbs during transit.

In the back are six switches that control the six bulbs, and three pigtails, for plugging into a power source.

The V2 light has been re-designed to run cooler, so you can leave it on all day without overheating the bulbs, or your Chimera.

The Barger-Lite uses a soft box, or "Bag" to gain the soft quality of light that flatters the talent. Chimera makes several bags that work great with the Barger-Lite. I tested a Medium Quartz Chimera with mine, and found it to be awesome.

Imagine using a lightweight fixture that is able to deliver 1000 watts to 6000 watts of light, simply by flicking six switches. This means no more climbing up a ladder to hang heavy fixtures, or having to change out hot scrims when the amount of light needs to be adjusted.

The Barger-Lite's ease of use is further enhanced by the fact that it does not require you to find a 60 amp circuit. To accomplish this, the Barger-lite uses three pigtails that can be plugged into three ordinary 20 amp, 120v outlets, via extension cords,

allowing you to use it just about anywhere.

In addition to being used in feature films like, Meet The Fockers, and The Punisher-War Zone, Barger-Lites are now being used on about 50% of the TV series being shot.

You can see the results on shows like Desperate Housewives, Mad Men, Boston Legal, Everybody Hates Chris, WWE (World Wrestling Ent.), and the show that I visited...Burn Notice.

Burn Notice started out as cable show on the USA network, and turned into a big hit.

I went to Miami, where the show is shot, and spent half a day watching DP Bill Wages A.S.C., and Gaffer Freddy Valentine do their thing.

Burn Notice is a big show, with about 150 employees. It uses the same DP, but changes directors every episode, so the crew really have to stay on their toes. In addition, each episode of the show is shot in five days instead of seven, so there is always a need to find faster ways of doing things, so Barger-Lites on this set makes sense.

The "Loft" set is the place where the lead character lives, so a lot of action happens there. Since Bill the DP, and Freddy the Gaffer needed to be able to move their Barger-Lites into position quickly, they came up with a very cool solution.

They mounted I-Hooks in the walls, and use a Z-rope ratchet on both sides of each Barger-Lite to secure it to the wall, and hold it in the proper position. Using this creative system, the light can quickly be moved anywhere around the room, and because the Barger-Lites are mounted to the wall, there are never any worries about light stands getting in the shot.

Bill likes a soft, natural look, so he created a "Chicken Coop", or

"Coffin" to add ambient light over the kitchen area of the Loft set. For those of you that are unfamiliar with these terms, he basically bounced six 1K Mole Richardson lights into a shallow box of reflective material, mounted to the ceiling. Since a dimmer controls each one of these 1K lights, the ambient light in the room is totally under control. The problem with any overhead light fixture is that it casts light straight down, resulting in some unwanted shadows.

To remedy this situation, Bill uses the Barger-Lites as backlights, and sometimes as a key light for close up shots.

Keeping with Bill's soft look, they use Medium, and Large Quartz Chimeras, with the Chimera front silk, as well as Full Soft Frost gel to further diffuse the light.

They also use 60 degree Honeycombs on the front of their Barger-Lites, to help them control where all that soft light lands, and the 19 pin SOCOPEX option from Barger which allows them to fully control each bulb via a dimmer. The overall result is great looking footage, which is shot in a timely manner.

By unscrewing the tension handle on the side of the Barger-Lite, it fits well in a Pelican iM3075 Storm Case, with Cubed Foam. The Pelican Storm Case is lightweight, yet strong, allowing the Barger-Lite, Chimera, Rods, and three 12 gauge 50 foot extension cords, to be easily rolled around from job to job, while protecting your investment.

When you need a high-powered Tungsten soft light that can be powered up in a home or business, consider the Barger-Lite. It's the one many professionals use...because it works