

LIGHT READING

customer newsletter



Gearing up for *winter*



Last December, we experienced the worst storm since Columbus Day, 1962. Almost half of City Light's customers endured outages lasting anywhere from several hours to more than a week. The damage to our electrical system was unprecedented.

Since then, we have thoroughly assessed our response to emergencies and learned some critical lessons.

Following are examples of improvements we've made and more are on the way.

City Light is committed to providing timely and helpful information to customers about when their power will be restored during emergencies.

- More lineworkers have been hired, increasing our ability to respond to outages;
- Designated teams will cruise assigned routes to locate and assess damage;
- Agreements for mutual aid during emergencies are in place with 39 utilities;
- Our tree-trimming budget increased by \$1 million, allowing us to better manage vegetation around power lines;
- We installed information system upgrades to improve communications;
- 90 percent of City Light employees have completed emergency-readiness training.



Be prepared for outages

Power outages occur for reasons largely related to weather and trees. It can happen any time, and we want you to be prepared. Here are some tips:

- Keep a basic power outage kit. Include: flashlight, wind-up clock, portable radio, mylar blanket, light sticks and batteries. Avoid anything with an open flame.
- If your electricity goes out, check your circuit breaker for a blown fuse or an open breaker. Also check where your service is connected to your house for damage. If you suspect a power outage call our Outage Hotline **(206) 684-7400**, for a recording of known outage locations. Report your outage if it is not already mentioned on the recording.
- If your service connection is damaged, call your electric service representative for advice. Call **(206) 615-0600** for services north of Denny Way and **(206) 386-4200** for services south of Denny Way. City Light does not repair customer-owned equipment. Licensed electricians should perform all electrical work.
- Use hot water sparingly. Most water heaters will keep water hot for up to three days.
- Food should be safe for about six hours in refrigerators and two days in freezers if doors remain closed. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Have a corded phone or cell phone available because cordless phones will not work without electricity.



Safety comes first

- Downed wires are extremely dangerous. Stay at least 10 feet away including any items you are carrying.
- Avoid carbon monoxide gas, which is invisible, odorless and can kill in minutes. Never operate fossil fuel burning appliances or burn charcoal inside enclosed spaces such as homes or garages. Only use a generator outdoors, far from open windows and vents. Never use a gas oven to heat your home. Learn more at www.metrokc.gov/health/disaster/carbon-monoxide or call **(206) 296-4600**. Safety information, translated into foreign languages, is available from these resources.
- Customers depending on electric life-sustaining equipment should register with City Light. For information and assistance call **(206) 684-3020**. Be sure to have emergency power backup, know how to operate it and test it regularly.



For more information, go to www.seattle.gov/light.

Bill payment contacts



Payment arrangements and information: (206) 684-3000.

TTY speech or hearing impaired: (206) 233-7241. Call us right away if you find billing irregularities or if you are unable to pay the full amount of your bill by the due date. *Interpreter service is available if English is not your preferred language.* Online information is posted at www.seattle.gov/light/accounts/.

The following payment options are free of charge:

Automatic Bill Payment: (206) 733-9100 or www2.seattle.gov/html/citizen/ach/. Your bill amount is automatically deducted from your checking account on the due date.

Budget Billing Plan: (206) 684-3345. This is for residential and small general-service customers with account balances of \$100 or less. The billing amount is calculated by dividing the past annual electricity charge into equal installments, which are applied over 12 months. This amount is recalculated annually.

E-Payment: (866) 873-0944 or www.seattle.gov/light/accounts/onlinepayment.asp. Pay your bills with selected credit or debit cards online or over the telephone. E-checks are also accepted.

Income guidelines apply to the following payment assistance options:

Discounted rates: (206) 684-0268; for qualified low-income customers.

Emergency Low-Income Assistance: (206) 684-3688; one-time, per year emergency assistance.

Federal Home-Heating Assistance: (800) 348-7144; federal funds provided on a first-come, first-served basis between November and June.

Project Share: (206) 684-3000; emergency assistance to income-qualified customers facing temporary financial crisis, who have received shut-off notices.



The Westlake Center holiday tree gets greener

When Mayor Greg Nickels throws the switch at the annual tree lighting

celebration, the majestic tree will be even greener thanks to new, energy-saving light-emitting diode (LED) holiday lights provided by Seattle City Light, Seattle Lighting Fixture Company, Westlake Center and American Lighting of Denver.

The greener LED lights promote environmental sustainability by using 90 percent less energy than

incandescent mini-lights. In addition, they shine more brilliantly, they have 100,000-hour life; and are much more durable. They can be used for years.

LED lights may cost more but their benefits outweigh the extra expense. If you are interested in switching to LED holiday lights, visit www.seattle.gov/twistandsave/ for more information including a list of stores that sell them.

Take Climate Action Now



Twist & Save by using environment-friendly compact fluorescent bulbs.

Watch our video of Seattle celebrities in action, at www.seattle.gov/twistandsave. We invite you to create your own 30-second Twist & Save video and mail to Anne Ducey, Seattle City Light, PO Box 34023, Seattle, WA 98104-5031. City Light will post a selection of customer videos.

Green Up! Participating customers pay a little more to invest in new renewable energy resources such as wind power for a percentage of their

annual electricity use. The monthly cost options for residential customers are: \$3 for 25%; \$6 for 50%; or \$12 for 100%. For more information or to sign up, visit www.greenupseattle.org or call (206) 684-8822.

Seattle City Light is a publicly owned utility dedicated to exceeding our customers' expectations in producing and delivering low-cost, reliable power in an environmentally responsible and safe way. We are committed to delivering the best customer service experience of any utility in the nation.

Help wanted

Project Share contributions

Our Project Share program helps income-eligible customers in crisis with bill assistance. Contributions are tax deductible and every penny goes to help customers. Through January 2008, we will mail a rubber-grip jar opener as a thank-you gift to:

- new contributors who donate at least \$30 all at once or \$5 per bill for a year;
- current supporters who increase their donations by \$30 or more.

Donations can be authorized online at www.seattle.gov/light/help/share/ or complete and mail the enclosed coupon.

Report malfunctioning streetlights

Call (206) 684-7056 or submit a report online at www.seattle.gov/light/streetlight. We need to know: the yellow pole numbers posted on the pole, the complete address of the closest building and a brief explanation of the problem. Our average repair time during the winter is about 17 working days.

Thank you



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This newsletter is available in alternate formats upon request. Translated newsletter information is available in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Somali, Tagalog and Korean. Call (206) 684-3000. www.seattle.gov/light

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