

# KEY CONNECTIONS

SUMMER  
2016

## BUILDING ON A TRADITION OF INNOVATION

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City Light Engineering  
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City Light's second superintendent, J.D. Ross, envisioned a city powered by cheap, clean hydroelectricity. In 1924, his dream was realized when City Light dedicated its first dam in the North Cascades.

Rapidly advancing technologies are poised to revolutionize our industry once again, and City Light can lead this revolution. To that end, we've created a business unit, focusing on inventive ways to meet future challenges. Here are two examples.

To provide for the increasing electrification of our transportation sector — electric vehicles, buses, light rail and streetcars — City Light has assembled a team from across the utility to complete a technical analysis of these issues and launch pilot programs.

The utility tested a distribution automation system on two major power lines in north Seattle. Designed to quickly isolate problems, the system can reduce duration of power outages. That pilot was so successful, we're expanding the system in Shoreline and plan new installations in south Seattle as well.

The future is now and we are on it.

## ENERGY PERFORMANCE TRANSPARENCY

On February 29, 2016, the Seattle City Council approved an amendment to an ordinance that makes data on the energy performance of buildings publically available. This change follows the norm already established by law in about a dozen other U.S. cities, including San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia, Minneapolis and Portland.

By sharing this information, we can create future market demand for energy-efficient buildings, protect tenant interests, and reward high performers. In addition, customers can compare energy use and future operating costs between similar properties, as well as use it to guide purchasing, leasing and financial decisions.

Starting with 2015 performance reporting on energy use, the city of Seattle will publish data for all buildings 20,000 square feet and larger on a website. The exact metrics will be determined through an updated **benchmarking director's rule**. Here's the schedule:

- July 2016 - Draft benchmarking rule published
- Two weeks - Draft benchmarking rule comment period
- September 2016 - Final benchmarking rule released

The city of Seattle engaged many stakeholders during the legislation's development, including the Seattle Building Owners and Managers Association International (BOMA), Seattle 2030 District, and the Rental Housing Association. City staff continue to reach out to the public via the rulemaking process. These efforts will offer a framework for the data that's useful to customers, show the data by building sector, allow building owners to provide relevant context, and note progress toward better energy efficiency.

## RATE SURCHARGE

Low revenue from the surplus energy City Light sells to other utilities has triggered a 1.5 percent surcharge on electricity rates, starting in August.

When the utility has more electricity than customers need, it sells that power to other utilities and uses the money to keep prices low. In 2016, City Light anticipated \$60 million in revenue from wholesale energy sales, but the utility is on track to earn only about \$43.5 million as a result of warm spring weather at a time of low prices on the wholesale energy market.

To make up the difference, City Light draws from a rate stabilization account. If the account dips to \$90 million or below, which it has, an automatic surcharge is applied to every customer's bill until the account returns to \$100 million. For details, please read the story on our Power Lines blog: [seattle.gov/light/surcharge](http://seattle.gov/light/surcharge).





## NEW CUSTOMER BILLING SYSTEM COMING SOON

City Light and Seattle Public Utilities continue to work on our new customer information and billing system. The project has been in the news lately due to delays for needed testing.

You may recall, we announced some time ago that we're replacing our outdated customer billing system, which is more than 15 years old. This project is integral to providing you with the best customer service and is critical to our operations.

While much of the new system will be invisible to you, it will provide enhanced operational efficiency, improved privacy controls and security for customer data, as well as enhanced theft protection.

New account numbers will be generated the day the system goes live. Your City Light customer-data for benchmarking and energy star will continue to be provided seamlessly. Your key-account manager will be available to answer questions and provide the new account numbers to you.

Currently, we're testing the move from the old system to the new system and doing other tests to ensure a smooth transition this fall.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

### Soheila Ghassemikia

Soheila is a key-customer manager who serves these groups: hospitals, Seattle University, commercial property managers and developers,

She has been with the account executive office for 11 years, moving over from the Conservation Resource Division where she was an energy management analyst for commercial and industrial buildings for five years.

Soheila grew up in Tehran, Iran and moved to United States when she was 17 to earn her bachelor's degree in engineering from Oregon State University. She also is a certified sustainable-building advisor.

Her hobbies include painting and gardening. Soheila and her husband have three daughters.



## CITY LIGHT SERVICES/INFORMATION LINKS

### Seattle MeterWatch

Online energy use and cost information service

### Green Button

A standardized and secure way to get energy-use data electronically

### Conservation Homepage

Information on cost-effective and efficient energy service

### Electric Service Engineers

Territory maps and contact information for City Light engineers

### City Light's Annual Report

Financial and customer information

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