

Seattle Steam to Replace Century-Old Stack at Western Avenue Plant

Disassembly and installation takes two weeks; will not impact service to customers

(SEATTLE) August 10, 2012 – District heating utility [Seattle Steam](#) has kicked off a two-week project to replace one of the two stacks at its Western Avenue facility. The existing black stack, which was installed in 1909, serves Seattle Steam’s two natural gas-fired boilers and its newer biomass boiler.

The stack has operated efficiently for 103 years and has not sustained major damage — even weathering multiple storms and earthquakes. Yet following routine examination and ultrasonic testing of the stack this spring, the company determined it was time to replace it as a proactive measure.

There will be no service disruption during the replacement period. In addition to keeping its two other stacks (one at Western Avenue and one at the Post Street plant) operational, Seattle Steam opted to do the replacement in August when heating demand is low.

“Seattle Steam is committed to maintaining up-to-date facilities for our customers and the surrounding community,” says Seattle Steam CEO Stan Gent. “One of the benefits of a district energy system is that the cost of these lifecycle updates doesn’t impact customer prices. Replacing the stack allows us to continue to provide reliable service, while giving the plant a bit of a facelift.”

The new steel stack will be installed in three sections. Once in place, it will stand approximately 105 feet above Seattle Steam’s roof; it is identical to the old one in size, shape, and functionality. It will be the same shade of taupe as the company’s nearby wood silo, blending with the plant’s existing color scheme. The old stack will be recycled as scrap metal.

The other existing stack at the Western Avenue plant is not due for replacement. It is responsible for flue gas heat recovery, enabling Seattle Steam to maximize the efficiency of its energy production and delivery. The Post Street stack was upgraded in 2001.

Seattle Steam hired national companies Industrial Environmental Systems (IES) and Gibraltar Chimney International to design, build, and erect the new stack. Contractors began on-site work on August 6. The entire process will be captured with time-lapse video.

About Seattle Steam:

Founded in 1893, Seattle Steam Company is a privately-owned district heating utility that provides heat to nearly 200 buildings in Seattle’s central business district and First Hill neighborhoods. The company has two plants and five boilers in downtown Seattle with 28 employees. The thermal energy is currently produced by a mix of biomass, a renewable fuel, and natural gas. For more on Seattle Steam, please visit www.seattlesteam.com.

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