

New Well Expands Seattle Steam's Environmental Commitment

Well will save customers money & ensure emergency water supply

SEATTLE (Nov. 21, 2013) – Seattle Steam announced today that it has completed construction and drilling of a new deep-water well that will expand the company's commitment to sustainable business practices. All that is left before the well becomes operational is a review and approval by the State Department of Ecology.

"The way we plan to use and return the water reflects our commitment to provide our customers affordable, environmentally sustainable energy," said Stan Gent, Seattle Steam president and CEO. "Within a few days of pumping water from our well, the water would enter Elliott Bay where it was heading, creating a sustainable circle where a valuable resource is neither consumed nor lost to the environment."

"We expect the well to start supplying water to our Western Avenue Plant next March," Gent said. He said the well will be permitted to produce 250 gallons of water a minute, which will be enough to meet about 80% of the company's annual water consumption and most importantly all the company's water needs during summer months when municipal water rates and demand are at their highest. The well was drilled to a depth of about 385 feet to an aquifer under the plant. The aquifer is like an underground river where at our location the water is about to enter Elliott Bay. Gent said that Seattle Steam will "borrow" the water, use it for a few days to make steam, then return the condensed steam to either the storm or sewer system where it makes its way to Elliot Bay.

"This well is a good investment for us for a variety of reasons," Gent said. "First, it gives a redundant water supply that adds to our reliability and resiliency. It further ensures that we can withstand a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, without a loss of service to our customers. Loss of water city water supply was a major risk factor in our earthquake response plan. Second, once the costs of the well are repaid, we hope to be able to reduce our costs and pass savings on to customers."

Seattle Steam, which was founded in 1893, relied on well water in its early days. As Seattle grew and added a reliable municipal water system, the company phased out using its own wells.

Gent said that Seattle Steam is now preparing a hydrogeological report for DOE review. DOE must issue the final water right before Seattle Steam can begin using the well.

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