

City Light customers' savings decrease

City Light customers suffered another lapse in conservation efforts last week, the utility said.

During the four-week period ending last Friday, City Light customers used 9.1 per cent less electricity than originally had been forecast. That was down from 9.3 per cent for the four-week period ending the previous Friday and down from 10 per cent for the period before that.

During the past week, the Seattle Steam Corp. fired up an electric boiler it had not used for three months. Bethlehem Steel, another big industrial user of electricity, was operating at normal levels and activity at The Boeing Co. resumed prestrike levels.

City Light asked its customers last February to try to reduce electrical use 10 per cent because of the drought. Since then, the conservation rate has averaged 8 per cent.

City Light said the conservation efforts have saved 516,000 kilowatt hours of electricity worth \$16 million if the utility had been forced to buy the power from outside sources.

The drought made it impossible for City Light to generate enough power from its own hydroelectric sources. The heavy rainfall and snowmelt in the North Cascades during the past week helped fill Ross Lake above the planned level for this time of year so that the short-term outlook now is good.

However, the utility said more of a snowpack will be needed to improve the long-term outlook for the hydro system.