

In 2011, there were over 485,000 computer sessions at the Central Library.



"Thank you for having all people of many colors and cultures working here. It's as '10 perfecto' as it gets."

-Central Library patron

At a Glance 2011

- 1,903,954 patron visits
- 1,505,823 materials checked out
- 400 public computers
- 8,757 story time participants
- 54,258 people attended educational classes and humanities programs

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Central Library

The Central Library plays three important roles in The Seattle Public Library system. It is a hub of technical, administrative and professional support for the branch libraries, a literary and artistic home for all of Seattle, and a neighborhood branch for those who live and work downtown. Every person who uses the Library system has access to citywide services such as the Quick Information telephone line, Ask a Librarian, Your Next Five Books, among others. The Central Library supports the virtual library, and its automated book sorting equipment ensures materials get to branches as quickly as they are available. The internationally-renowned building also is a magnet for tourists and the heavy use of the facility and reduced staffing and support challenge the ability to effectively meet the demands of its three essential roles and serve residents citywide.

Needs: The levy will strengthen the Central Library's pivotal position by preserving open hours, updating the technology infrastructure that supports Library operations systemwide, maintaining the book-sorting equipment, investing in audiovisual services for citywide events, and adding technical support for people using the public computers on Level 5. Funding for much-needed regular building maintenance is also included.

What this means for patrons:

- Preserve current hours and bookmobile services
- Add books, electronic books, movies and music and reduce wait times, especially for popular titles
- Expand children's collection of books systemwide to support early literacy and early learning
- Eliminate one-week systemwide closure
- Upgrade technology services, including computers, software, printers, copiers, online services and infrastructure
- Increase maintenance, including specialized cleaning and furniture care, periodic restroom updates, major maintenance

Programs:

Story times in English and Spanish, tax help, author readings, citizenship classes, ESL classes, Thrilling Tales for Adults, Talk Time, computer classes in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, lecture series, musical performances, tours, opera previews, Teen Advisory Group, book groups

Currently open:

Seven days a week

Special features:

The Central Library has a Language Center with books, movies and music in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian and East African languages. Bilingual staff members are available to answer questions and help patrons. There are ESL and citizenship resources, including classes, books and DVDs. The Library Equal Access Program has resources for the blind, low vision, deaf and hard of hearing. In addition, there is an auditorium, meeting rooms, music practice rooms and designated areas for children and teens. There are more than 400 public computers in the building. The Seattle Room, filled with local history, is located on level 10.