

Hot

100 Degrees Wednesday And More Of The Same

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You must have been aware of it, but just for the record, the temperature Wednesday soared to 100 degrees. And it's expected to reach that point or beyond again today.

It's been hot enough this week to make you wonder whether your air conditioner is going to blow a fuse.

But despite the boiling mercury and oppressive humidity, Sumter power companies report no difficulties in meeting the increased demand for cooling.

"We've had a minimum of heat-related problems," said Lad Owens, district manager for Carolina Power & Light Co.

HE SAID A FEW minor problems, such as

Washington Burning, Too

WASHINGTON (AP) — Washington is burning, spelled H-O-T.

Temperatures over 90 on 10 of the past 11 days. Enough humidity to keep mosquitos happy. Enough bad air for a health warning.

On Wednesday, the thermometer hit 100, the first time in eight years. The forecast is for temperatures of near 100 through Monday, with humidity over 70 per cent.

It's enough to make the city's newly opened air-conditioned subway stations a place to rest as well as wait for a ride. The jobs held by subway employes are among the best in town: working in cool concrete caverns underground, explaining the mysteries of the new train system to tourists and commuters alike.

"This heat makes me feel lazy and evil," said one sufferer, Gunther George, a 49-year-old fruit vendor working at his downtown stand on Wednesday.

Washington wasn't alone. Much of the nation was experiencing temperatures in the 90s on Wednesday, and some sections had readings over 100. In Birmingham, Ala. it was 102, in Detroit, 100; Atlanta, 100; Las Vegas, 105; Phoenix, Ariz., 108. Richmond, 105. Omaha, 100; Des Moines, 103; Dallas-Fort Worth, 100.

Electrical use set a record during the day in Washington, a city of great clusters of air-conditioned federal offices.

Highway pavement buckled. And for more than 1 million suburban residents, there wasn't even the retreat of the neighborhood pool to look forward to. A major pumping station was knocked out.

The National Weather Service held little hope that a line of thundershowers moving into the area from Pennsylvania would dislodge the stifling heat.

having to change a couple of transformers, had arisen because of the heat. But he said there had been no major problems. "And I don't anticipate any problems during the year," he said.

Owens explained that it would take several days of sustained heat to cause enough strain for a major problem to occur.

"Timing is working to our advantage," he said, "with a lot of industries being down (for July 4 vacations) this week."

John Anderson, executive vice president of Black River Electric Cooperative, said Black River has had no problems with the heat and he doesn't anticipate any.

"THE BIGGEST PROBLEM we have is with thunderstorms. This is the biggest lightning season we've had," he said.

Anderson said Black River could continue to meet demand for cooling despite rising temperatures "unless something unexpected happens."

The summer heat has been a boon for local air conditioning contractors. Gene Briggs, of Briggs Corp., said his company was "swamped with repairs."

He said most air conditioners are designed to cool at a maximum of 95 degrees. "With hot nights and days," he said, "some air conditioners just aren't cooling enough."

He said repair demands had been especially high this week, because of recent high temperatures in the area.

AIR CONDITIONING contractors also are experiencing an increase in sales. "Sales are up tremendously," Briggs said. "Contractors are experiencing increased sales all over the state."

Briggs noted that heat pumps accounted for much of this increase. "A lot of people have been asking for heat pumps rather than conventional air conditioners," he said.

The summer heat has proven to be anything but a boon to Sumter area farmers.

BILL WISE, SPOKESMAN for Production Credit Association, a major lending institution to farmers, said rain is needed because of the hot weather.

"With 100-degree weather, we need rain. We could use a good root-soaker right now," he said.

Wise said rain was especially needed for crops in Pinewood and Dalzell and that the soybean crop is partially dry.

The recent hot, dry weather has damaged the corn crop in Rimini and Summerton, Wise said. "But the tobacco looks good, as well as cotton, which is a hot weather crop," he said.

The Sumter city water plant has been functioning at full capacity at all times, a spokesman said. "We're producing more water than ever," he said.

He said the water plant is having no problems supplying water now, but that problems could arise if Sumter's dry spell continues.