

§ 76.1619 Information on subscriber bills.

(a) Effective July 1, 1993, bills must be clear, concise and understandable. Bills must be fully itemized, with itemizations including, but not limited to, basic and premium service charges and equipment charges. Bills will also clearly delineate all activity during the billing period, including optional charges, rebates and credits.

(b) In case of a billing dispute, the cable operator must respond to a written complaint from a subscriber within 30 days.

(c) A cable franchise authority may enforce the customer service standards set forth in this section against cable operators. The franchise authority must provide affected cable operators 90 days written notice of its intent to enforce standards.

§ 76.1620 Availability of signals.

If a cable operator authorizes subscribers to install additional receiver connections, but does not provide the subscriber with such connections, or with the equipment and materials for such connections, the operator shall notify such subscribers of all broadcast stations carried on the cable system which cannot be viewed via cable without a converter box and shall offer to sell or lease such a converter box to such subscribers. Such notification must be provided by June 2, 1993, and annually thereafter and to each new subscriber upon initial installation. The notice, which may be included in routine billing statements, shall identify the signals that are unavailable without an additional connection, the manner for obtaining such additional connection and instructions for installation.

§ 76.1621 Equipment compatibility offer.

Cable system operators that use scrambling, encryption or similar technologies in conjunction with cable system terminal devices, as defined in § 15.3(e) of this chapter, that may affect subscribers' reception of signals shall offer to supply each subscriber with special equipment that will enable the simultaneous reception of multiple signals. The equipment offered shall in-

clude a single terminal device with dual descramblers/decoders and/or timers and bypass switches. Other equipment, such as two independent set-top terminal devices may be offered at the same time that the single terminal device with dual tuners/descramblers is offered. For purposes of this rule, two set-top devices linked by a control system that provides functionality equivalent to that of a single device with dual descramblers is considered to be the same as a terminal device with dual descramblers/decoders.

(a) The offer of special equipment shall be made to new subscribers at the time they subscribe and to all subscribers at least once each year.

(b) Such special equipment shall, at a minimum, have the capability:

(1) To allow simultaneous reception of any two scrambled or encrypted signals and to provide for tuning to alternative channels on a pre-programmed schedule; and

(2) To allow direct reception of all other signals that do not need to be processed through descrambling or decryption circuitry (this capability can generally be provided through a separate by-pass switch or through internal by-pass circuitry in a cable system terminal device).

(c) Cable system operators shall determine the specific equipment needed by individual subscribers on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the subscriber. Cable system operators are required to make a good faith effort to provide subscribers with the amount and types of special equipment needed to resolve their individual compatibility problems.

(d) Cable operators shall provide such equipment at the request of individual subscribers and may charge for purchase or lease of the equipment and its installation in accordance with the provisions of the rate regulation rules for customer premises equipment used to receive the basic service tier, as set forth in § 76.923. Notwithstanding the required annual offering, cable operators shall respond to subscriber requests for special equipment for reception of multiple signals that are made at any time.