

Handful in Hills to get cable TV before February

By Craig Piechura,
staff writer

The cable-by-Christmas prediction didn't pan out but the local manager of MetroVision Cable Television Co. says the first customers should be choosing from 47 channels by the end of this month.

The first area to be served — and only a smattering of homes — will be in an area known as the Farmington Green subdivision, north of 12 Mile, west of Drake, in Farmington Hills, says Tom Bjorklund, general manager of MetroVision of Oakland County.

On Dec. 27 the company moved all employees into new offices on Enterprise Court, just west of Haledale and a half mile south of 12 Mile Road, in Farmington Hills. Construction on the one-story building located north of the Farmington Hills Department of Public Works Building began with groundbreaking on Sept. 30.

"We should hook up a few people, on a test basis, within two weeks to make sure the system is working properly," Bjorklund said Tuesday.

Salesmen will begin knocking on doors trying to drum up subscribers by the first of February in selected areas, he said.

AREAS EXPECTED to be targeted for cable hook-up in February, Bjorklund said, include the Chatham Hills subdivision of Farmington and an area northwest of 10 Mile and Haggerty Road in Novi.

In the early going, Bjorklund said, residents can expect to see about 250 homes connected per month, but more than 1,000 installations a month by spring "when things get cranked."

In areas where at least 30 subscribers per mile of cable agree to hook up, all customers should be watching cable TV by November, said Bjorklund.

"Imagine a horseshoe," he said, explaining the installation route. "We'll be going around the horseshoe north, west to the northeast corner, southeast to the southwest corner."

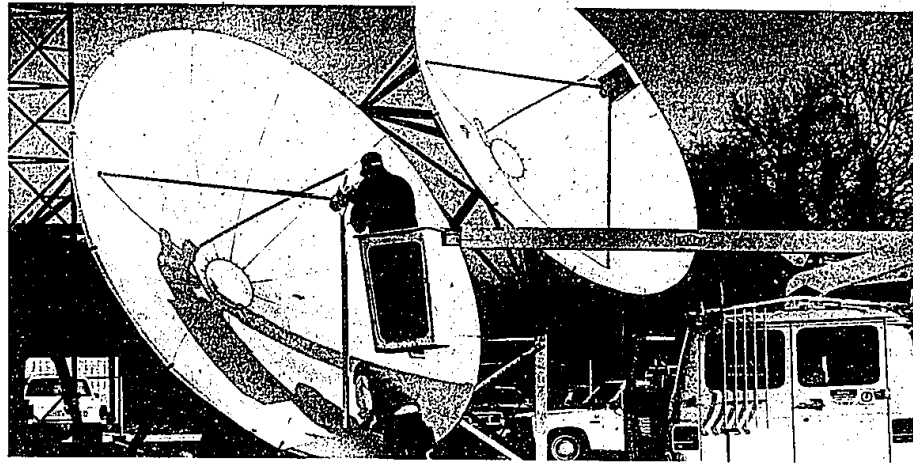
Consequently, areas in the middle — such as the Bel-Aire subdivision in Farmington — will wait longer for cable installation.

The rate, fixed by city council, is \$14.75 per month for subscribers who want cable and an optional pay-TV offering such as Home Box Office (HBO). Persons who just want the local TV fare and community access channels can subscribe to basic cable which costs \$2.45 monthly. The ultimate package, including four pay-TV movie channels, would cost a subscriber \$37.25 per month.

METROVISION's headquarters and studio — called "head enu" in cable TV lingo — is still being equipped and furnished but is open for business. Next to the building are two 4.6-meter microwave receiving dish antennae pointed at fixed-orbit satellites.

One of the dishes is aimed at the Westar-5 satellite owned by Western Union, which sends MetroVision the Satellite News Network channel and WOR-TV in New York City, a so-called super station. The remaining satellite

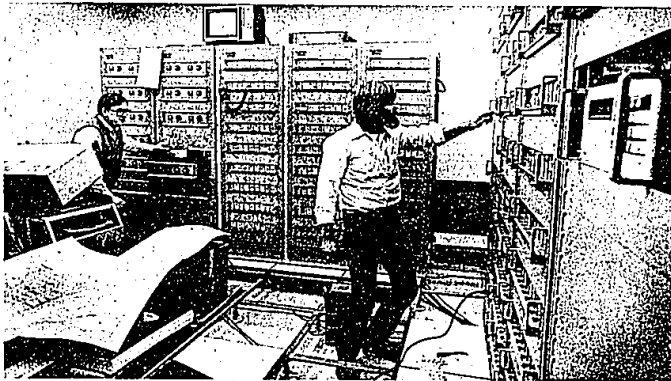
Please turn to Page 9



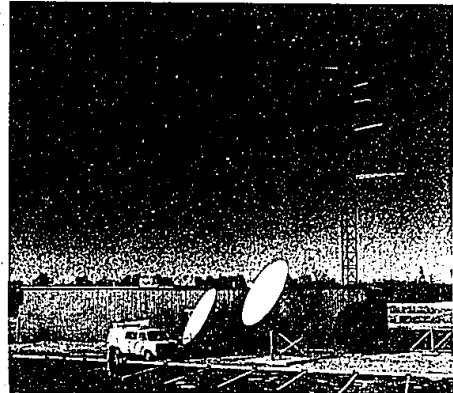
RANDY BORST/staff photographer

A minor power problem on the two microwave receiving dish antennae at MetroVision cable company sent two technicians out-

side to correct things. The dishes receive programs re-transmitted from satellites orbiting the earth.



Technicians Dave Hanley, left, and Harry Smith, "head enu" at MetroVision. The room contains two knobs and switches in the control room, or, about \$250,000 worth of equipment.



Offices and transmitters for MetroVision Cable Television of Oakland County are contained in the company's regional headquarters in Farmington Hills.

Customers are confused by phone center changes

By Carol Anahid Axizian,
staff writer

The Bell System is ringing in the New Year with major changes in the way customers do business with the phone company.

Customers no longer will be able to lease or exchange phones, request new service or discuss service billing problems at Michigan Bell phone center stores.

"Customers who are used to doing business at company offices in person will feel the changes the most," said William J. Schlager, a Michigan Bell vice-president.

"Since we won't be providing the same kinds of walk-in services anymore, we're urging customers to call us first to avoid possible frustration and the inconvenience of wasted trips."

The changes were made because of a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) order intended to break up American Telephone and Telegraph's monopoly on the telecommunications industry, Schlager said.

"Because the FCC has said that the Bell System can sell telephone equipment only through a separate subsidiary, Michigan Bell literally will be a phone company without phones."

CUSTOMERS will be able to lease phones from Michigan Bell only until the company's inventory runs out. After that, they will have to buy phones from other suppliers.

Suppliers include the 17 phone center stores in major shopping malls such as the Northland Center in Southfield. The stores are now operated by American Bell, a subsidiary of AT & T.

Susan Nokes, zone manager of American Bell, said the new company has increased prices of some phones from \$3 to \$5, and reduced prices of others by \$20 to \$25.

Nokes added that many customers who walked into phone center stores this week didn't realize they could no longer conduct Michigan Bell business there.

"Some brought in bags of phones to be repaired," she said.

"We have to take more time to tell each customer or what's going on."

"Most customers realize it's cheaper to purchase a phone once you explain it to them. But there are others who are just disgruntled with the whole process."

Besides American Bell stores, major retailers such as Sears, Radio Shack and Hudson's sell phones.

Small businesses like the Phone Connection in Appleton Square, Southfield, also have jumped into the act.

"We were anticipating the deregulation of the Bell System a couple years ago," said Harry Topper, president of the Phone Connection. He opened the business two months ago along with Robert Shubow and Edward Uchwal Jr.

"We're working with a smaller profit margin (than American Bell) and can afford to sell phones at lower prices."

Topper also offers repair and installation services for a fee.

But most customers who buy telephones from other suppliers must install the phones themselves. Michigan Bell will continue to install phones bought or leased from the company.

Michigan Bell customers will be required to make an appointment before picking up or exchanging telephones at one of the company's 58 service centers throughout the state. Arrangements may be made to have new phones delivered by private parcel delivery service at an additional charge.

Phone pick-up also will be available at 94 Foto-mat stores and 160 service agents such as banks, pharmacies and supermarkets across the state.

Repair service will be available by calling 221-2121 (for residential customers) and 221-5131 (for businesses).

Bill payments can be made by mail, at centers which have accepted them in the past and at collection agents.

lect pledges for each pin they topple.

The bowlers will compete for prizes awarded to the top three bowlers raising the most money for the Lung Association.

First-place prize is a mini-vacation for two at the Wheels Inn in Chatham, Ontario. A night for two at the Westin Hotel in the Renaissance Center will be awarded to the second-place winner. The third-place prize is a portable black-and-white television set. Participants collecting \$25 or more will receive a "Police Super Bowl" T-shirt. A team trophy will be awarded to the top team, with individual trophies for all team members.

All participants are invited to attend an awards party at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 130, at 2905 Hilt, Ferndale, on Feb. 1, from 7-11 p.m.

Police fight lung disease

Tri-County area police officers will do their part in January to "arrest lung disease" when they participate in the first annual Police Super Bowl for the benefit of the American Lung Association of Southeastern Michigan (ALASEM).

Police officers who are members of precinct and department league teams in 87 Tri-County cities are invited to bowl and collect pledges for the American Lung Association during January.

In addition, members of the Detroit Police Officers Association, the Detroit Police Lieutenants and Sergeants Association, the Deputy Sheriffs Association, the Police Officers Association of Michigan and the Fraternal Order of Police have been asked to participate in this first annual fund-raiser.

Police teams of six or more bowlers will bowl three games at the center of their choice and col-

NEW YEAR BEAUTY SPECIALS



Chantilly by Houbigant

The Super Softeners...a soft way to start your new year, and save too! Three favorites specially-priced during our January once-a-year sale. Choose Hand and Body Lotion or Ultra Rich Hand and Body Cream because nothing else can soften and scent you so deliciously, all over. And the most pampering way to bathe or shower, with Luxury Body Shampoo. The new year is here, and you're soft and scented...thanks to Chantilly by Houbigant. Offer good while supply lasts. Hudson's Aisles of Beauty, all stores.

Ultra Rich Hand and Body Cream, 6 oz., reg. \$7, now 3.50

Luxury Body Shampoo, 12 oz., reg. \$7, now 3.75

Hand and Body Lotion, 16 oz., reg. \$7, now 3.50

hudson's aisles of beauty



ORDER BY PHONE: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In Metro Detroit, call 569-2454. Elsewhere, order toll-free 1-800-233-2000.