

# Commission agrees with customers: increase rates review



KAREN COLLINS

Are you upset with the recent increase in cable rates? Well, someone is working on behalf to keep cable rates low. And that someone is the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC). In fact, it is our job to regulate rates on a local level, so many cable subscribers have called us to see what we can do about the increase in July.

SWOCC took action on this issue in May, as soon as we were informed of the July 14 increase. We consulted with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and our local attorney to see what could be done. We also met with MetroVision and listed the reasons why we felt an increase should not take place. MetroVision provided supporting documentation justifying the increase, and showing that it satisfactorily followed FCC guidelines. So your rates went up on July 14.

This may not make you happy, but there are certain things we can do, and certain things we can't. First, we regulate rates for channels 2-23 only. All other non-premium channels are regulated at the federal level. Secondly, SWOCC can only enforce the rules, but it's the FCC that writes them. And we must follow FCC guidelines in enforcing those rules. SWOCC Chairman Bill Hartstock said it best when he drew the analogy that the FCC handed us a gun with no bullets.

But that wasn't totally stopped us. In mid-August, we received the official document (it's called

an FCC Form 1200) that MetroVision filed with us and the FCC to justify this rate increase. Because it's so complicated, we plan to have an accounting firm review it. If any discrepancies are found, MetroVision will be required to pay a rebate as it did in February.

But that's not all. SWOCC has also filed an FCC Form 329 with the FCC. This is basically a cable rate complaint for the channels they regulate (24-28 and 47-61) on behalf of the subscribers in Farmington, Farmington Hills and Novi. This complaint begins a legal process that requires our cable company (MetroVision) to demonstrate that its rates are reasonable under the law.

What else can you do? So many times when consumers are upset, they throw up their arms in frustration thinking there's nothing they can do. Your opinion counts. Although we can't promise a prompt drop in your cable rates, at the SWOCC office we keep a record of all cable complaints, no matter what the topic. As in any documentation process, the facts followed FCC guidelines, and (to mix metaphors) the more complaints the squeakier the wheel. So let us know what you think.

Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission (SWOCC), 24021 Research Drive, Farmington Hills 48335, (810) 473-7266.

You are also free to contact the FCC with your feedback. Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Cable Services Bureau, Consumer Protection Division, 1919 M Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20554, (202) 418-0856.

Free TV production classes begin at MetroVision right after Labor Day, so sign up now by calling Joan Lillie at 553-7303, ext. 251.

Karen Collins is the Executive Director of the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission.

## CHANNEL 12

Monday, Aug. 22

- 10 a.m. — Travel with Kay: Turkey and Syria
- 10:30 a.m. — Women on the Move: I Natural
- 11 a.m. — Coffee and conversation
- Noon — Farmington Hills Police Journal
- 12:30 p.m. — Dollars and sense: M-Care
- 1 p.m. — Seniors on the Move: boxing trainer
- 1:30 p.m. — The word of life: Peter's perspectives
- 2 p.m. — Prescription for your health: podiatrist
- 2:30 p.m. — Community kids
- 3 p.m. — North American Indian Journal
- 4 p.m. — Positively: recovery
- 4:30 p.m. — Clansville High School 1994 commencement
- 6 p.m. — Home for life: basic wiring
- 6:30 p.m. — Bagels and talk with Tracy and Phil
- 7 p.m. — Farmington Focus: Farmington city services
- 7:30 p.m. — Chi-aerobics: Les-son 22
- 8 p.m. — The road: motorcycling
- 9 p.m. — Your money matters: mutual funds
- 9:30 p.m. — Groove session.

## Tuesday, Aug. 30

- 10 a.m. — Summit University
- 11 a.m. — Praise, praise, praise
- 11:30 a.m. — Life matters
- Noon — Adventures with Pirate Pete
- 12:30 p.m. — Spontaneous sen-ior
- 1:30 p.m. — Senior spotlight:

- services for the hearing im-paired
- 2 p.m. — Salon glamour and et-quette with Gloria: Spa II
- 3 p.m. — Dance with Virginia: showtime
- 3:30 p.m. — Library check it out
- 4 p.m. — Seniors beware
- 5 p.m. — Crime watch
- 5:30 p.m. — Living with your additions
- 6 p.m. — Seniors on the move: boxing trainer
- 6:30 p.m. — Business and real-estate news
- 7 p.m. — Cash talks
- 7:30 p.m. — Viewpoint
- 8 p.m. — Salon glamour and et-quette with Gloria: Spa II
- 9 p.m. — Let's talk with Ben Marks.

## Wednesday, Aug. 31

- 10 a.m. — Capitol Report
- 10:30 a.m. — Madonna maga-zine
- 11 a.m. — Study in scripture
- 11:30 a.m. — Amvets
- Noon — The way the truth and the life
- 12:30 p.m. — That's Italian
- 1 p.m. — Rising tide
- 2 p.m. — Dickerman showcase: one light up
- 2:30 p.m. — Reborn: Uncle Jesse Wilson
- 3 p.m. — Farmington's past peo-ple and places: John and Shir-ley Richardson
- 3:30 p.m. — Paws with a cause
- 4 p.m. — Crisis in the modern family: teen concerns
- 5 p.m. — Impact video
- 5:30 p.m. — Groove session
- 6 p.m. — Senior messenger
- 7 p.m. — The word of life: Pe-ter's perspective
- 7:30 p.m. — Good health: spe-cial delivery
- 8 p.m. — My vote counts
- 8:30 p.m. — Lansing connection

9 p.m. — Speaker's row.

## Thursday, Sept. 1

- 10 a.m. — Senior messenger
- 11 a.m. — Community Update: homeless
- 11:30 a.m. — Bagels and talk with Tracy and Phil
- Noon — Cash talks
- 12:30 p.m. — Life, liberty and health: hospital billing prob-lems
- 1:30 p.m. — Medical update:
- 2 p.m. — My vote counts
- 2:30 p.m. — Chi-aerobics: Les-son 22
- 3 p.m. — A moving experience
- 3:30 p.m. — Animal awareness

- 4 p.m. — Seniors on parade
- 5 p.m. — Law talk: estate planning
- 6 p.m. — An old-fashioned ice-cream social
- 7 p.m. — Crisis in the modern family: teen concerns
- 8 p.m. — Novi news week
- 8:30 p.m. — Cooking with class: barbecue chicken
- 9 p.m. — Exotic evening: middle eastern dance.

## Friday, Sept. 2

- 2 p.m. — Request your favorite commu-nity access program to be cablecast on Friday between 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. Call MetroVision at 553-7303.

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Wed.	8:20am	Mon.	7:20pm	Sun (all)	8:20pm
Wed.	12:20pm	Tue.	7:20pm	Sun (all)	8:20pm
Thurs.	8:20am	Thurs.	7:20pm	Mon.	5:20pm
Thurs.	8:20pm	Thurs.	7:20pm	Sat (all)	8:20pm
Thurs.	8:20pm	Thurs.	7:20pm	Thurs (all)	8:20pm
Thurs.	8:20pm	Thurs.	7:20pm	Thurs (all)	8:20pm

**FAMILY TWOSOME**  
Any Adult/Youth  
Combo  
\$1.00  
1:00 P.M.

**SATURDAY YOUTH LEAGUES**  
1:00pm - 1:15pm  
1:15pm - 1:30pm  
1:30pm - 1:45pm  
1:45pm - 2:00pm

**YOUTH SNACK LEAGUES**  
Ages 9-11  
Thursday - 4:00 pm  
Friday - 4:00 pm  
Saturday - 1:00pm

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