

Cable TV thieves to meet with interference

CABLE CONNECTION



MARY LINDA CALDERONE

A conversation I had with my 12-year-old son this week has prompted me to write on the subject of cable theft. He came home from school telling me about the magazine to cable without paying or unauthorized viewing of premium services that are not paid for are both misdemeanors punishable by imprisonment or fine.

On speaking with MetroVision's Regional Director for Marketing Dan Dinsmore and Cindy Kulek, Dinsmore's marketing clerk, I was told the cable industry estimates \$4.3 billion in lost revenue because of cable theft. The cable company's aim is certainly not to put people in prison or make them pay hefty fines. They do, however, feel that everyone should pay their fair share. It is the honest subscribers who end up subsidizing those people who are stealing cable.

"MetroVision has three cases of cable theft pending in federal court as well as up to 30 cases in various stages of investigation," Dinsmore said. Area police agencies have been very cooperative in conducting search warrants. I was curious as to how cable companies could find out about such thievery. Dinsmore told me that many times MetroVision employees working on cable may notice unauthorized lines. Anonymous tips are also reported to the cable company. Rewards for tips may range from \$25 to \$300, the higher amount for people who are caught selling boxes. The number to call to report cable theft is 1-800-241-5689.

"Well then," I asked, "how can they get away with selling decramblers in the back of magazines?" Dinsmore explained to me that, although it is illegal under Michigan law to sell or possess such equipment, the companies who are shipping this equipment are from out of state. Consequently, they are out of reach of Michigan law. He also told me many advertisements hope to skirt over legal issues by putting disclaimers in small print saying you must call your local cable company for authorization to use this equipment. However, Dinsmore was quick to point out that no one had ever called him for permission.

"As good corporate citizens, January was 'Amnesty Month' at MetroVision. All who stepped forward with illegal boxes were not prosecuted. From this point on, the company will prosecute where illegal connections are found. Per Dinsmore, civil settlements of up to \$10,000 have already been collected for possession of illegal equipment. Is it worth a huge fine like that plus a criminal record? Think about it.

CHANNEL 12

Monday, April 4

10 a.m. — Travels with Kay: Switzerland

10:30 a.m. — Women on the Move: Debbie Stabenow

11 a.m. — Coffee and conversation: hating healthy

Noon — Farmington Hills Police Journal

12:30 p.m. — Dollars and Sense: Thomas Neal taxes

1 p.m. — Seniors on the move: the gourd king

1:30 p.m. — The word of life: How to plan financially

2 p.m. — Kitchen ceramics

2:30 p.m. — What is a healthy kid

3 p.m. — North American Indian Journal

4 p.m. — Positively recovery

4:30 p.m. — Children helping children

5:30 p.m. — Prescription for your health: physicians assistants

6 p.m. — American Health: T.B.

6:30 p.m. — Bagels and talk with Tracy and Phil

7 p.m. — Rainbow of promise: Pastor Sam

7:30 p.m. — Adventures with Pirate Pete

8 p.m. — Impact video

8:30 p.m. — Tax talk: electronic filing

9 p.m. — Democratic close-up: Gary Kohut

9:30 p.m. — Groove session

Tuesday, April 5

10 a.m. — Drawing men to Christ

'MetroVision has three cases of cable theft pending in federal court as well as up to 30 cases in various stages of investigation.'

Dan Dinsmore

MetroVision's regional director for marketing

11 a.m. — Happiest people alive

11:30 a.m. — Created equal: Northville

Noon — Adventures with Pirate Pete

12:30 p.m. — Spontaneous seniors

1:30 p.m. — Outdoor adventure: Nra Clay

2 p.m. — Salon glamour and etiquette with Gloria: perms all texture hair

3 p.m. — Cosmic Connection

4 p.m. — A moving experience

4:30 p.m. — Farmington Hills composing with Joe Derek

5 p.m. — Lansing connection

6:30 p.m. — Living with your addictions

6 p.m. — Jr. Japanese: Lesson 24

6:30 p.m. — Business and residential news

7 p.m. — Cash talks

7:30 p.m. — Farmington Hills police journal

8 p.m. — Salon glamour and etiquette with Gloria: perms all texture hair

9 p.m. — Dickerman showcase: one flight up

9:30 p.m. — Farmington's past people and places: Emily Butterfield

Wednesday, April 6

10 a.m. — Legislative forum

10:30 a.m. — The job show

11 a.m. — Study in scripture

11:30 a.m. — Oakland Press perspective

Noon — The way the truth and the life

12:30 p.m. — Abundant life Arabic ministries

1 p.m. — Life, liberty and health: insurance benefits

2 p.m. — AIM: Cairo, Egypt

2:30 p.m. — Toadally Michigan: skydiving

Thursday, April 7

10 a.m. — Senior messenger

11 a.m. — Restoring the Rouge

11:30 a.m. — Bagels and talk with Tracy and Phil

Noon — Cash talks

12:30 p.m. — Home for life: moldings

Friday, April 8

— Request your favorite community access program to be shown 2-9 p.m. Call MetroVision at 553-7303.

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