

When your cable is out, who are you going to call?

During this summer's storms, many of us have lost power or trees or cable television. We can't help you with your power or trees, but we can help you get your cable service back with the least amount of frustration possible.

The answer is on your cable bill. But you have to read your bill carefully.

Often, subscribers call us here at the cable commission because our number is on the bill. But we can't do a thing to restore your cable service. Instead, look at the top left of the lower portion of your bill for Time Warner's numbers.

According to Time Warner Cable's Regional Community Relations Manager Kirk Smith, the first thing you should do is call the Time Warner Oakland Repair line.

"Always call when the cable is out, even if you think your neighbors have already called. We may not know yours is out as well," Smith said.

That number is the 24-hour Service number on your bill, (248) 553-7307. If that number is busy, you can also call the Livonia office repair line at (734) 422-3410 or the Redford Repair Line at (313) 538-5115.

These numbers are not on your bill, so you may want to clip and save this article near your phone. When you call those numbers, you will get an automated attendant that will offer you a choice of three options - to report a cable outage, to check on a service call or to order repair service.

You would press 1.

Then you are provided with a choice between two things - to hear a list of outages and to report an outage. Even if you hear that your area is out, it is important for you to report that your house has no cable, because the Cable Company has no way of knowing if specific addresses are out. They can only track outages by area, not by address.

And what if you get a busy signal?

The cities' customer service standards ordinance requires that: "Under normal operating conditions, the customers may receive a busy signal less than 3 percent of the time."

However, normal operating conditions means those service

CABLE CONNECTION



MELANIE YOUNG

Your best bet is to keep trying. Repair answers calls from 8:30

conditions which are within the control of the cable operator. So the Cable Company is off the hook (so to speak) in the case of a large power outage, severe weather conditions and other uncontrollable situations.

a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

(These are more hours than are required under the cities' customer service standards ordinance.)

After that, all calls are answered by an answering service. If you experience an outage after hours, you can still call, but a technician won't be sent out that evening unless they have received at least three reports from the same area.

So you've reported your outage and the cable has returned. Now

you can sit back and wait for that refund to come to you right? Wrong.

You are entitled to a refund for the time your cable service was out, but you must call the Cable Company to be eligible. Once again, Time Warner has no way of knowing if individual customers have an outage, even if you called for repair. The folks at Repair don't have access to your account and cannot give you a credit.

So, you have to call for a refund. This time though, you need to call the Customer Ser-

vice Department at (248) 553-7300.

What if your cable service has returned but you only have basic cable when you pay for expanded basic? Call the company. It may be as simple as flipping a switch to fix your problem. That way you won't be paying for a service you aren't getting.

Remember that although the Cable Commission's phone number appears on your cable bill, we can't do anything for an outage. We only handle complaints that are not resolved by Time Warner.

By the way, if you are interested in viewing that customer service standards ordinance, it is available at each city hall and at SWOCC.

Melanie Young is the Community Relations Specialist for the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission. The next SWOCC meeting is 7 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 21 at Farmington Hills City Hall. The next CAC Meeting is 7 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 14, at SWOCC. The next Access Forum is 7 p.m., Tuesday Sept. 1 at SWOCC.

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BUSINESS

MARKETPLACE

Items for Business Marketplace are welcome from all companies and residents active in the Observer-area business community. Items should be typed or legibly written and sent to: Business Marketplace, c/o The Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, e-mail: kmortson@homecomm.net or faxed to (734) 591-7279.

Pharmacy improves service

Recently Rite Aid introduced RapidScript, its exclusive revolutionary dispensing technology that will help pharmacists fill most prescriptions (frequently ordered tablets/capsules) in 10 minutes or less. RapidScript allows the pharmacist to harness the power of computer-based laser, bar code and robotic technologies to fill and label each prescription as directed, triple-checking for safety and accuracy.

Another impact will be more time and attention from the pharmacist for advice about medications. They'll now have more time to educate patients about their medications, an important factor in helping patients receive optimal benefit from them.

ISO certification

Omron Dualtec Automotive Systems of Farmington Hills has registered and received certification for the ISO14001 environmental management standard. This standard, being implemented in all manufacturing facilities throughout the Omron Automotive worldwide organization, is a formal review, evaluation and audit of a company's environmental management systems. This certification follows the company's registration to QS9000 and ISO9001 in 1997.

CALL 1-800-424-8165 TO ORDER ANYTIME. STORE HOURS: Laurel Park Place open Sun, 12-6, Tue-Sat, 10-9. OPEN LABORDAY: Laurel Park Place, 10-6.

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