



December 1, 2021

RE: CABLE TV RATES AND FUTURE TV PLANS



The fees Mid-Rivers must pay to the owners of CBS, NBC, ABC, FOX and associated broadcast stations to carry local TV channels in your cable lineup are going up again on January 1, 2022. Fees we pay to the companies who own and produce cable programming (ESPN/Disney, Turner Networks, NBC Universal, FOX, Discovery Networks, Root Sports and others) will also increase again January 1. To help cover the latest programming cost increases, without dropping channels, cable TV customers will see the following rate increases **effective January 1, 2022**:

- The Local Broadcast Station Charge will increase by \$3.00 per month.
- Expanded, Choice and Ultimate Cable TV packages (and Bundles including these packages) will increase by \$10.00 per month.

The ways customers watch video have changed greatly in the last few years. As you know, we have been forced to drop programming from the cable TV lineup, and continually raise subscriber rates to keep up with ballooning programming costs. Cable TV subscriber counts are on a steep decline as customers move to streaming video. Cable TV is a courtesy we have provided only to certain customers in select areas, while customers in all parts of our service area rely heavily on us for Internet and telephone services. Cable TV makes up only about 12 percent of the Cooperative's active customer connections today. Traditional cable television services are no longer a sustainable option for small communities.

To give you plenty of time to examine the many other video options available, we are notifying you more than two years in advance that **Mid-Rivers plans to discontinue cable television service as of *December 31, 2023***. You are free to make other arrangements for TV services at any time prior to that date. As you transition to other TV services, please keep in mind the "Important Switching Tips" included at the bottom of our TV Options and Streaming Guide on the reverse.

**Mid-Rivers Internet and telephone services will NOT be affected.** In fact, this change will allow us to focus on staying ahead of your broadband needs and making sure all our communities across 30,000 square miles have the essential, robust broadband Internet services they need to survive and thrive.

Many small cable providers are facing the same challenges, and the same difficult decisions. Fortunately, today's video customers have more options than ever before. We know you value your TV services, and we will be here to help you transition to a video service that makes sense for you. Please talk to one of our representatives about your many options today and take advantage of the time available to make the right decision for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Candelaria".

Michael Candelaria,  
General Manager/CEO



## TV OPTIONS

### TRADITIONAL PAY TV

**DISH and DirecTV (AT&T)** both offer services throughout the area, including packages with local channels and solutions for apartments and other multi-unit facilities.

**Mid-Rivers does not have partnerships or referral agreements with satellite companies or any other TV providers.** Beware of scams and contact them at their listed telephone numbers or official websites only.

### FREE ANTENNA TV

What's better than free!? Many digital broadcast networks and subchannels - the programming many of us watch most - are available **FREE** over the air using an antenna. Many are available in High Definition (HD). You can purchase indoor and outdoor antennas at local hardware stores and online.

**Use your TV's menu options to scan for available channels.** In this region, some areas can receive up to 13 channels free over the air, such as CBS, NBC, The CW, GRIT, ion, Court TV, NEWSY, and more! *(Ability to receive these channels depends on your location, equipment, and other factors.)*

### STREAMING VIDEO

Streaming your video over a broadband Internet connection is now a mainstream option. More than **8 in 10** households in the U.S. subscribe to at least one streaming service.

Streaming allows you to create your own customized lineup. Watch Live TV, video on demand, or both.

- **Local channels** are available in this area on streaming services like YouTubeTV, NewsON, STIRR, and others.
- **ESPN+** has a huge selection of **streaming live sports**, no traditional pay TV subscription required.
- Streaming is now the **ONLY** way to watch **local Montana high school sports** and other events on the NFHS Network.
- The **National Finals Rodeo (NFR)** streams on SlingTV and The Cowboy Channel Plus app.
- Big Sky Conference events including **Cat and Griz** games stream on FuboTV.

### STREAMING GUIDE

Streaming TV can seem complicated, but many streaming devices and services are easier to use than your set-top cable box and remote! To start streaming, you need an Internet connection and a SmartTV or other device with streaming capabilities. You may already have both if you have a newer TV set and a service Bundle!

### STREAMING DEVICES

- **Smart TV** - Many newer flat-screen TV's come with streaming capabilities already installed. If you can see apps like Netflix or Roku in your TV's menu, it is a Smart TV. Smart TV's have an app store just like a smartphone where you can download streaming services.
- **Other Streaming Devices** - If your TV doesn't already have streaming, or you are looking for a streaming app that isn't available on your Smart TV, you can purchase a device that plugs into the USB port on your TV set. Google Chromecast, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire, XBOX and PlayStation are commonly used streaming devices.

*Ask us about getting a **FREE** streaming device so you can start watching today!*

### STREAMING SERVICES

- **A Mid-Rivers Internet Connection** - If you are in a service bundle, you should already have it - a fast, reliable Wi-Fi connection with plenty of speed for any streaming service and device!
- **Free or Paid Streaming Services** - Free live local TV. Live Montana High School events. Huge libraries of old Westerns. Every episode of your favorite TV series. Classic sitcoms and movies on demand. There are SO MANY options, the only problem is what to watch first!

**Start by checking out apps already installed on your Smart TV or streaming device.** Then use these online tools to find the services that carry the shows and movies you want to watch:

- **Suppose.TV**
- **MyBundle.TV**
- **[www.midrivers.com/video/](http://www.midrivers.com/video/)**

## IMPORTANT SWITCHING TIPS

- **Choose a reputable provider.** If it seems too good to be true, or you are uncomfortable with pushy sales tactics, don't let them talk you into something you don't want.
- **Consider cutting the Pay TV cord.** You don't need a traditional cable or satellite TV subscription to stream video.
- **Understand what you are buying.** Some TV providers may try to sell you inferior Internet service or switch your Internet or phone services without your knowledge.
- **If you have Mid-Rivers Internet and/or phone service, make sure it is still working before any TV installers leave.** Service charges may apply for Mid-Rivers to fix wiring issues caused by another provider connecting services.