

§ 76.1621

without an additional connection, the manner for obtaining such additional connection and instructions for installation.

§ 76.1621 Equipment compatibility offer.

Cable system operators that use scrambling, encryption or similar technologies in conjunction with cable system terminal devices, as defined in § 15.3(e) of this chapter, that may affect subscribers' reception of signals shall offer to supply each subscriber with special equipment that will enable the simultaneous reception of multiple signals. The equipment offered shall include a single terminal device with dual descramblers/decoders and/or timers and bypass switches. Other equipment, such as two independent set-top terminal devices may be offered at the same time that the single terminal device with dual tuners/descramblers is offered. For purposes of this rule, two set-top devices linked by a control system that provides functionality equivalent to that of a single device with dual descramblers is considered to be the same as a terminal device with dual descramblers/decoders.

(a) The offer of special equipment shall be made to new subscribers at the time they subscribe and to all subscribers at least once each year.

(b) Such special equipment shall, at a minimum, have the capability:

(1) To allow simultaneous reception of any two scrambled or encrypted signals and to provide for tuning to alternative channels on a pre-programmed schedule; and

(2) To allow direct reception of all other signals that do not need to be processed through descrambling or decryption circuitry (this capability can generally be provided through a separate by-pass switch or through internal by-pass circuitry in a cable system terminal device).

(c) Cable system operators shall determine the specific equipment needed by individual subscribers on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the subscriber. Cable system operators are required to make a good faith effort to provide subscribers with the amount and types of special equipment needed

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to resolve their individual compatibility problems.

(d) Cable operators shall provide such equipment at the request of individual subscribers and may charge for purchase or lease of the equipment and its installation in accordance with the provisions of the rate regulation rules for customer premises equipment used to receive the basic service tier, as set forth in § 76.923. Notwithstanding the required annual offering, cable operators shall respond to subscriber requests for special equipment for reception of multiple signals that are made at any time.

§ 76.1622 Consumer education program on compatibility.

Cable system operators shall provide a consumer education program on compatibility matters to their subscribers in writing, as follows:

(a) The consumer information program shall be provided to subscribers at the time they first subscribe and at least once a year thereafter. Cable operators may choose the time and means by which they comply with the annual consumer information requirement. This requirement may be satisfied by a once-a-year mailing to all subscribers. The information may be included in one of the cable system's regular subscriber billings.

(b) The consumer information program shall include the following information:

(1) Cable system operators shall inform their subscribers that some models of TV receivers and videocassette recorders may not be able to receive all of the channels offered by the cable system when connected directly to the cable system. In conjunction with this information, cable system operators shall briefly explain, the types of channel compatibility problems that could occur if subscribers connected their equipment directly to the cable system and offer suggestions for resolving those problems. Such suggestions could include, for example, the use of a cable system terminal device such as a set-top channel converter. Cable system operators shall also indicate that channel compatibility problems associated with reception of programming that is