



# Services

All around communications.

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A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Spiraling cost of carrying local television channels must be passed along to cable television customers

Significant rate increases have become virtually an every year event for video or cable TV providers like WT Services and the past year has been no exception. Substantial rate increases come from the programmers that make their sporting or specialty channels available for viewing. Although cable TV customers and providers alike would like to be able to choose only their favorite channels these programmers often require video or cable TV providers to carry numerous “companion” channels in order to receive the one or two

channels that cable TV customers most desire.

The Federal government also requires video and cable TV providers to regularly renegotiate their agreements with local broadcast stations (such as KVII, KAMR, KFDA, and KCIT in Amarillo.) The Retransmission Consent Agreement contracts permit video and cable TV providers to retransmit the “off-air” signal local broadcast stations make

available to viewers, so that it may be viewed by customers using video or cable services without an additional antenna.

WT Services has been negotiating both major programming channel contracts and new retransmission agreements with local broadcast stations for the last several months. Although local broadcast stations make their signal available free “off air,” they have elected to charge vid-

eo and cable TV providers, on a per customer basis, to make the very same signal available to their viewers. This is in addition to the programming fees that must be paid for all common “cable” channels such as ESPN, Disney, Lifetime, FOX Sports, The Outdoor Channel, Speed, etc.)

Charges for the local channels carried on WT Services system range from \$1 to \$2.25 per subscriber household, per month. The expense for the local channel content, in addition to other programming content, left WT Services with two possible courses of action. Option One was to eliminate the local broadcast channels or other channels from the WT line-up, but doing so would have meant WT Services viewers would not have access to local ABC, CBS, NBC or PBS channels. Option Two was to continue to carry the

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## WTS downtown Hereford office is now open on Saturday

For the added convenience of our customers WT Services is announcing the extension of its office hours in downtown Hereford to include Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon, beginning December 6.

We recognize the fact that 8-5 Monday through Friday doesn’t work for everyone, thus the extended

hours on Saturday.

Customers will now be able to call or come by on Saturdays to make bill payments, and talk to us about our state-of-the-art broadband Internet, Cable TV, and telephone services and to sign up for services, and conduct other business on Saturdays.

The drive-up payment window will also be open.

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**Hereford: A Smart Community—with Fiber to the Premise—by WT Services.**

## WT Services will offer scholarships for second year to seniors at Hereford, Friona, Bushland high schools

For the second year WT Services will award scholarships to graduating seniors from Hereford, Friona, Bovina, and Bushland high schools. Application forms will be available in mid-January and recipients will be announced in May.

Scholarships are open only to students whose parents or guardians are WT Services customers, or, to students who are WT Services customers themselves. Applicants must also be either high school seniors who are candidates for graduation this spring, have completed high school, or have received their GED.

Scholarship monies will be disbursed in increments per semester.

An official application form, accompanied by two letters of recommendation, and a wallet-size photo must be submitted. One of the letters of recommendation must be from a teacher, principal, or counselor from the high school that the applicant is currently attending.

In Hereford, applications may be picked up at the WT Services office at 119 East 4th, or at the Hereford High School counselor's office.

Applications and rules may be picked up at the WT Services office in Friona at 1010 Columbia, and will be provided to the counselor's offices at Friona, Bovina, and Bushland high schools.

To be considered, applications must be fully completed, legibly typed or written, have no attachments other than the photo and two required letters of recommendation, and must be received at the offices of WT Ser-

vices, Inc. P.O. Box 1776, Hereford, Texas 79045, no later than April 8, 2015.

Applicants may be asked to attend an interview at the discretion of the WT Services board.

Mechanics of the scholarships include the following:

- \* WT SERVICES scholarships may be used at any state or church-sponsored college or university, or at any accredited vocational or technical school.

- \* Recipients must maintain a minimum of twelve credited hours throughout each semester, or have full-time student status at vocational or trade schools.

- \* Upon enrollment or pre-enrollment for the fall semester, recipients must send WT SERVICES a confirmation from the registrar's office. Should a recipient drop out of school for any reason, the unused portion of the scholarship will be rescinded.

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broadcast channels and the programming many viewers are passionate about, and pass the cost along to viewers.

To ensure that WT Services viewers have continued access to the programming offered by the local broadcast channels and that all other "must be carried" channels are available, it will be necessary to implement a service rate increase early in 2015.

The rate increase applies to all WT Services video packages, as all packages include the local broadcast channels.

To add a little perspective, the lion's share—81 cents out of every dollar that WT Services customers pay for video services, goes toward the fees paid to programmers.

Payments to some local broadcast stations have gone up a whopping 200 percent following the latest round of negotiations. WT Services takes its responsibility to provide quality programming at the lowest possible rates very seriously. Every effort was made to negotiate the most favorable terms with the local broadcast

stations and other major programmers. Programming from local broadcast channels and others such as KAMR, KVII, KFDD, and KCIT remain the single largest expense faced in the provision of your video service. We appreciate your video business and will continue to explore options, as they become available, to minimize the rate increase impact on our customers.

If you have any questions in regard to your video entertainment services, please call our office at 360-9000.