

Policy Proposal 1: Require video service providers to include Community TV program listings in the Electronic Program Guide (EPG).



Current law: State law does not require community television program schedules to be listed on the Electronic Program Guide (EPG) that cable TV subscribers routinely use to find, select and record programs.

Changes needed to current law: If a local government requests it, video service providers would be required to allow the program schedules of Community TV channels to appear in the Electronic Program Guide with the same functionality as other channels.

Why changes are needed: Cable subscribers routinely use the EPG to find and pick out TV shows to watch either in real time or to record. However, Wisconsin video providers have only authorized a few Community TV channels to get on the EPG with their program schedules, effectively stopping subscribers from finding, viewing and recording Community TV shows of interest.

Background:

- At least thirty community TV channels would like to be on the EPG. Only nine WCM-member community TV channels are on the Electronic Program Guide with their program schedule:
 - Madison City Channel (Charter),
 - McFarland Community Television (Charter),
 - Stevens Point Community Television (Charter),
 - WSTO Stoughton (Charter),
 - Sun Prairie Media Center (Charter),
 - Trempealeau County Community Television (TCCC),
 - WIN-TV Waupaca (Charter),
 - West Bend Community TV (Charter),
 - Wisconsin Rapids Community Media (Solarus and Charter).
- The sporadic success our members have had in getting on the guide has taught us that the difficulties our members encounter are not technical. Community TV channels use digital scheduling software that interfaces easily with third party vendor applications provided by TiVo (Rovi) and Gracenote.

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