

Dish-Sinclair carriage dispute could remove 100+ channels from satellite TV provider

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A dispute between satellite TV provider Dish and media company Sinclair could result in more than 100 local TV stations being removed from the pay TV service.

Sinclair Broadcast Group, headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, said Monday an agreement with Dish is unlikely to be reached before the companies' current one expires Aug. 16. If that is the result, 108 Sinclair stations and its Tennis Channel would be removed. The stations include 97 ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC affiliates and their removal would impact 3.5 million Dish subscribers across 38% of the country, Sinclair said.

Englewood, Colorado-based Dish has 8.55 million satellite TV subscribers and 2.44 million Sling TV subscribers. These negotiation with Sinclair do not involve Sling, Dish said.

As is typical in these carriage disputes, both sides say the other is to blame. Dish "has a demonstrated track record of dropping local and national programming that viewers value," Sinclair said in a press release about the standoff.

"DISH has recently had carriage disruptions, some of which continue to this day, with the NFL Network, HBO, the Bally Sports Regional Sports Networks, Mid Atlantic Sports Network, Altitude Sports Network, the NBC RSNs, Nexstar Media Group, E.W. Scripps Co., Mission Broadcasting, Cox Media Group, Sunbeam Broadcasting, and Capital Broadcasting. In the past few years, DISH Network has dropped over 230 channels due to carriage disputes," Sinclair said.

You can see the list of channels that Sinclair says could be dropped. Sinclair's markets include Austin, Texas, Birmingham, Ala., Chattanooga, Tenn., Cincinnati, Green Bay-Appleton, Wisc., Oklahoma City, Pittsburgh, Seattle-Tacoma and Washington.

"The media conglomerate is trying to use its market power to demand an unreasonable fee increase, using millions of Americans as pawns in its negotiations," Dish said in a [press release](#). "Sinclair is demanding DISH pay nearly a billion dollars in fees for their television channels—a massive increase from what we pay for these same channels today despite declining viewership," said Dish TV group president Brian Neylon said in a statement.

Dish said it is still planning to negotiate, he said. "There is still time to reach an agreement with Sinclair that is fair for all parties involved, especially our customers," Neylon said.

Rich Greenfield, partner and media and technology analyst at LightShed Partners, tweeted that Sinclair is "trying to FORCE carriage of" the regional sports networks it acquired two years ago from Disney. Disney had to sell them to gain approval for its \$71 billion bid for Fox.

Less than two weeks ago, Dish ended a dispute with AT&T that kept HBO and Cinemax off its system for more than three years.

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