

## Time Warner Cable (TWC) Chautauqua Program 2016

The program for Chautauqua residents is still in place for 2016. This program allows you to select from the entire menu of offerings from TWC. You can go to their website at [www.twc.com](http://www.twc.com). At the upper right corner of the page click on "change" and put in 14722. The website will now show you all of the products from TWC, both individual selections of TV, Internet and Phone, as well as various packages. However, read the rest of this e-mail before you go to the TWC website.

If you are a TWC customer, log in to your account and then you can select the options that you prefer.

You also can initiate or change your Chautauqua Program service on the telephone by calling:

**1-877-892-2225**

When you are connected to TWC on the telephone, select option 3 to add, move or cancel a service. When you are connected to a customer service person, you should begin by telling them that you are calling to change your service under the special Chautauqua Program. You may need to inform the person that this is a special program for residents of the Chautauqua Institution which allows us to select from the entire menu of TWC choices. If the customer service representative does not know about the Chautauqua program, tell them to look up the document "CHQ" on their help key which describes the program.

I suggest that you go online and look at the various choices available from TWC and their prices. That way you will be able to inform the customer service person of the listed prices on the TWC website if he/she quotes you different prices. In addition, there are packages posted on the TWC website for TV + Internet + Phone and various combinations. TWC may have additional options that are not listed on the website such as Standard TV + Standard Internet. To make certain that you get the lowest prices, you will need to know the prices from the website for all of the TWC services that you are considering. While this is a tedious process on the telephone, at best, you should be able to order the services that you wish and at the lowest prices that are available.

There have been concerns in the past that some TWC customer service reps have been telling customers that they can give them better prices than they see online or that they can get with the Chautauqua program. These have resulted in some customers purchasing packages that are far in excess of their needs for Internet speed and/or TV. I communicated with my contact at TWC who is in charge of retention marketing and is in the Schenectady, NY office. She responded:

"Our sales folks will always try to match customers with all the services the agents think the customer will enjoy, but they certainly should not be dissuading the customer from the package that \*best\* suits the customer's needs. I will note that we currently have a fantastic sale on our triple play. As a result, any customer who might ordinarily buy two services from us can spend less and get three services. That might be what is happening here.

Regarding the rates on our website: like most companies, we may offer "web-only" special deals. Customers who see an offer on our website might have to order through the website in order to get that extra discount. As of right now, there isn't too much of a difference between our best deal over the phone and our best deal on the web site, but that could change as promotions are sometimes tested or exclusively offered on the website."

Thus, a word to the wise! At minimum, check the TWC prices on the Internet before you call. If they are quoting you prices on the telephone that are in excess of the prices that to see on the Internet, ask them for those prices, or else hang up and try use the Internet to set up your system. If that is too confusing for you, either ask someone for help, or else at least call TWC back again. You will get another customer service representative who may quote you a different price. This has happened commonly in the experience of Chautauquans in the past.

### **Chautauqua Program Summary - Seasonal (off season special) rate:**

- 1) The main feature of the Chautauqua program is a change to an off-season rate for a period of up to 9 months. On the basis of our suggestion, TWC now has made the 9 month seasonal plan available to all its customers.
- 2) Chautauqua residents are able to keep their Internet service active in the off-season while changing their other services to the off-season rate, or even discontinuing them. For example, I lowered my Internet to the “Every Day Low Price” level of 2 mbps (14.99) after the season because I have a wi-fi thermostat. I discontinued my TV service but my account stays active. This is not available for other TWC customers – *their off season rate is all or none and cannot be split.* (see also the May, 2016 information in the paragraph below).
- 3) Pro-rated billing: If a customer makes a change in the middle of a billing cycle, the prices are pro-rated. That way, customers are only paying for that portion of the cycle when they had the services. If they already are paid in full for the whole month, TWC will mail a check to them for the credit.

### **Off Season Rate suggestions from TWC (May, 2016):**

- a. Residents who went on a Seasonal Plan last Fall should not have to call Time Warner Cable upon their return. When they return to Chautauqua, they should find their services restored on the date they provided when they departed. If they qualify for one of our bundle packages, their bill will reflect that discounted price. Of course, as always, residents should feel free to call us if they have questions, concerns or need any changes to their package or plan, but they don't have to call.
- b. When it is time to leave, residents can visit [www.twc.com/seasonal](http://www.twc.com/seasonal) to put themselves into a Seasonal plan. They can also use that link to make changes to the date of their return.
- c. When a resident goes on a seasonal plan for Internet, his or her modem continues to function at the speed of our Every Day Low Price package which is currently 2 Mbps. That download speed might suffice for many over the holidays, with no change to their Seasonal plan.
- d. Active TV customers will also have access to TWC TV, the app which lets subscribers watch up to 300 channels of live TV and thousands of titles on demand on virtually any device (eg, tablet, smartphone, Roku, laptop etc.) Customers can even watch TV on-the-go, although the channel lineup is more limited when a customer is not connected to his or her home network.

### **Internet services** – These are available at a range of speeds and prices:

(mbps = megabits per second)

Everyday low price (2 mbps) – 14.99

Basic (6 mbps) – 29.99

Standard (15 mbps) – 34.99

Turbo (20 mbps) – 44.99

Higher speeds also are available

To use Internet services you need to have a cable modem which is a device that converts the signal on the TWC coaxial cable into a digital Internet transmission. You then connect your computer to the cable modem with an Ethernet cable. If you wish to have wireless Internet, then you also need to have a router which connects to the cable modem and then broadcasts the wi-fi signal throughout your house. A single device which combines the cable modem and the router into one piece of equipment also is available (both for lease from TWC, or for individual purchase).

You are able to lease the cable modem and router from TWC. However, this means that you have to obtain the devices when you come up to Chautauqua and then return them to TWC at the end of the season. Alternatively, you can purchase your own device and then connect it to the TWC network. The cable modem has a unique identifier called a MAC address (printed on a label on the device). If you own the cable modem, you call TWC and then give them the MAC address of your cable modem. Once it is registered with TWC, it will start receiving an Internet signal. You then connect your router to the cable modem and once it is configured, you will have wi-fi Internet access.

If you only are in Chautauqua for the summer season and you have a TWC cable modem or router, you can have the leased TWC modem shipped to and from your home, or visit the local TWC store in Westfield or Jamestown to pick-up/drop-off in person. If you plan on being in Chautauqua in the off season, you can continue your Internet services at the standard rate until you leave. If you have TWC leased equipment and prefer not to have to return it, you can arrange for the Chautauqua program off season rate which can be for up to 9 months. This allows you to keep the equipment, pay \$5/month for a service charge to keep your account active, as well as the leasing fee for the modem.

If you own your own equipment, you just call TWC to discontinue the service and then turn off the modem at the end of the season, or whenever you leave for good. The following year when you return, you call TWC to start/reactivate your account and give them the MAC address of your cable modem. However, there may be a charge to start/reactivate your account. This charge would likely be less than paying \$5 per month for the 9 month seasonal fee. However, if you own the cable modem it is possible that you may be able to start and stop your Internet service when you come to Chautauqua during the off season if you are paying the \$5 seasonal rate to keep your account active. We were told that this was possible, but since I kept my Internet service active all year, I was unable to verify that this was true. I was told that if I kept my Internet service active at the lowest level, I would be able to increase and decrease the Internet speed if I wished to do so during holiday periods.

### **Cable TV Services –** There are a range of TV services available from TWC:

Starter TV (20+ channels) – 10.00 (I don't see this on the website – you may have to speak to a representative on the telephone to get this rate).

Starter TV + HBO (20+ channels) – 29.99

Standard TV (70+ channels) – 39.99

Preferred TV (200+ channels) – 49.99

Preferred TV with DVR service (200+ channels) – 64.99

In addition to the separate Internet and TV services, many packages are available which also include telephone service. In addition, TWC allows you the ability to mix and match various levels of services to build your own package.

**\*\*Important note about TWC telephone service as part of your package –** If you include telephone service in a package and you do not plan to have year round service, be aware of the fact that monitoring services (fire, smoke, etc.) need to have the telephone line active 24/7 all year long. Thus, if you have monitoring services, make sure that your telephone will remain active even though your Internet and cable TV services are discontinued for the off season. TWC will provide you with equipment that will do this. However, if you cannot be certain that your telephone line will remain active in the off season for your monitoring service, I suggest that you maintain your Windstream telephone service and do not include TWC telephone in your cable package.

Changing Cable box/DVR TV services: TWC suggests that if a customer will be away from Chautauqua during the off season (9 months), they should return the cable TV box. They state that “the technology is changing rapidly and they are constantly upgrading equipment, so ultimately that will ensure that customers have current equipment”. Customers would not have to personally return their equipment to a store however. TWC has a program in place where they will send the customer the packing box and labels, and the customer may mail equipment back to TWC. Of course the customer still can return the cable box to the store (Westfield or Jamestown) if they preferred to do so. TWC could also send a technician to pick up the box but that would incur a fee.

If the customer will be away for less than 9 months, then he or she may prefer to go on the seasonal rate, pay the monthly seasonal fee and keep the equipment in-home. (If the set-top box becomes obsolete while they are on the seasonal rate, TWC will send a letter inviting the customer to swap their box.) TWC has told us that with the seasonal plan, the customer is able to activate their service for holiday periods when they are in Chautauqua and then go back to the seasonal rate for the remainder of the 9 month period. However, I believe that they will charge a fee for the re-connect and disconnect each time so that this “benefit” may be costly and may not be worthwhile. I don’t know if anyone has tried to do this in the past off season and I would appreciate knowing if they encountered any difficulties.

We have been told by TWC that in the situation where you maintain the lowest level Internet service throughout the year (\$15/month) you will have the option to increase the level of service temporarily if you return for short periods. Then, when you return the following June, you would be considered an active Internet-only customer upgrading to Internet plus TV. You could quite easily do a self-installation. Your connection to the TWC pipeline would still be live, so you would just have to pick up TV equipment at one of the TWC stores and plug it all back in. There would be no installation fee for that. If you didn't want to go to the store, you could have TV equipment mailed to you. Mailing equipment carries a charge of \$9.99 but sometimes that is subject to a free promotion too.

The following is a response from my contact person at TWC in response to concerns about customers being sold services in excess of their needs:

“ I re-read the CHQ document and it is accurate. If any of your residents hear from an agent that it is not accurate, feel free to suggest that the customer speak to a supervisor. I will remind our Northeast Care team about CHQ and the document’s availability on our internal KEY system this week. Agents should have no trouble finding it if the search for CHQ or Chautauqua. Like any search, if they misspell Chautauqua, they won’t get the right result.

Our agents might be able to offer a special unadvertised promotion from time to time. If you have examples of customers who were oversold or misled into a package that did not respond to the customer’s request, let me know. I would send that customer’s name to the Care supervisory team who will listen to the call recording and either coach or discipline as appropriate”.

**IntelligentHome Services** - TWC has a service called IntelligentHome, which offers home monitoring while customers are away. We were told last year that they were working on a package designed specifically for the seasonal customers that might remove all the cumbersome up-and-down activity. That package would provide TV and Internet while the customer was in-season, and home security and monitoring (for temperature, water leaks, frozen pipes, etc) while the customer is away. I have not heard whether or not this package has been made available. If anyone is interested in that program, please check with TWC

Bill Neches  
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