

Hearst, DirecTV reach deal on programming fees

December 31 2010

(AP) -- DirecTV satellite subscribers around the country will continue to receive network TV stations owned by Hearst Corp. after the two companies reached a new deal over the fees that DirecTV pays the broadcasting company to carry stations on its lineup.

The original deal would have expired at midnight Friday, and subscribers in Boston, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and other markets could have lost Hearst-owned stations on DirecTV. Hearst owns 29 local TV stations, which include affiliates of all the major networks except Fox.

Many of these negotiations over fees have been going down to the wire recently as broadcasters look to tap a second source of revenue outside of selling commercial time. Some disputes have even extended past the expiration of previous deals, leaving cable and satellite subscribers without channels for days, even weeks.

Sinclair Broadcast Group is still wrangling with [Time Warner Cable](#) Inc. over the same issue. If a deal isn't reached by midnight Friday, 33 stations could go dark for Time Warner customers. However, Time Warner Cable said late Thursday that it will continue to show all available programs from ABC, CBS, [NBC](#) and Fox this weekend even if Sinclair pulls local programming such as the evening news. Such a plan could mean that college football fans may be able to watch Saturday's ABC broadcast of the Florida Gators playing in the Outback bowl after all.

Hearst and DirecTV reached a new deal Wednesday and announced it Thursday.

Terms were not disclosed. DirecTV, which is based in El Segundo, Calif., has about 19 million subscribers nationwide, although the company would not say how many could have been affected had it failed to reach a deal with Hearst, which is based in New York.

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Citation: Hearst, DirecTV reach deal on programming fees (2010, December 31) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-12-hearst-directv-fees.html>

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