

Comcast adds Chicago customers to those under data caps

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Comcast is increasing the number of home internet customers who will face limits on how much data they can use before getting hit with extra charges.

The company is adding the Chicago region and says that caps will now cover 23 percent of customers, from 14 percent before. Caps already apply in Atlanta, Miami, Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee, and other regions. AT&T and some smaller providers also meter home internet.

Data limits, which are already common with cellphone plans, have drawn complaints from customers and some public-interest groups because they can make it more expensive to watch Netflix and other streaming video services that compete with cable.

Philadelphia-based Comcast, one of the country's largest TV and internet providers, says it listened to customers' concerns and has raised caps from 300 gigabytes a month to 1 terabyte. It says that allows for streaming 700 hours of high-definition video—around the clock for almost the entire month—or playing 12,000 hours of online games. Large households with several devices might reach the limit quickly, but Comcast says less than 1 percent of customers exceed 1 terabyte.

Affected Comcast customers get charged \$10 for every 50 gigabytes they exceed the monthly limit, or they can pay an extra \$50 a month for an unlimited plan.

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