

BRIGHT IDEAS



Braintree Electric
Light Department
and
BELD Broadband



A monthly newsletter for BELD & BELD Broadband customers, published April 2019

The cable TV landscape is changing more quickly than ever before—here's why

Complicated content agreements

Curious about recent changes in your BELD Broadband bill? Let's dive into some factors impacting cable television rates and offerings ... Each channel carried by a cable company requires an agreement. These agreements are complex and make it impossible for cable providers to offer flexibility to customers—they're the reason for certain requirements when you subscribe to BELD Broadband cable service.

For example, Turner owns more than 10 networks including TBS, TNT and Cartoon Network, and it requires cable providers to carry all of them. This is also why "a la carte" service is not an option. Content agreements prevent cable providers from choosing which networks they make available to customers.

Continually increasing costs

Cable companies nationwide are dealing with rising costs, and it's not uncommon to find some who barely break even.

There are two main types of costs: retransmission consent fees, the costs to retransmit our local broadcast stations (WBTS, WBZ, etc.), and programming fees paid to the networks to carry their channels. Both of these fees increase each year, sometimes at a rate of more than 20%.

Sports programming rights are heavily influencing these fee increases. Escalating salaries of star players and coaches place large financial demands on teams and leagues, who in turn drive



up programming costs to cover expenses. These costs are passed on from the networks to cable companies, and then unfortunately to customers.

Changes in viewing habits

In the 1980s and '90s when cable TV was becoming popular, it was really the only way to watch the best shows and movies in your home (unless you rented from Blockbuster). But today, customers have many more options for watching content because of Internet-delivered services like Netflix, Hulu and Prime Video. While BELD Broadband supports online streaming with a menu of fast, reliable Internet speed levels, the variety of viewing choices makes it difficult for cable TV as viewers shift their attention to new platforms and content.

We hope this helps you understand what's happening in cable TV, not just in our community but across the country. Want to learn more—or increase your Internet speed to handle more streaming? Call us at 781.348.BELD(2353).

BELD payment reminder

BELD Customer Service Reps no longer accept cash payments in our office. If you would like to pay your electric or broadband bill with cash, please visit **South Shore Bank at 372 or 1010 Washington Street**. Note that only the Braintree locations can accept your payments.

You can pay by check or credit card by calling 781.348.1001, or—even better—you **can make payments safely and securely online at beld.com** using our online payment system. You can view your payments, consumption information and billing statements, and view and pay multiple accounts at once.

Contact us at cservice@beld.com or 782.348.BELD(2353) for details.

BELD gets greener with new hybrid bucket trucks

We are excited to have two new hybrid electric bucket trucks join our fleet. These new vehicles will help us operate more efficiently and reduce our impact on the environment.

The engines run on diesel, but once we get to the job site we can run all the aerial equipment, hydraulic tools and exportable power from the integrated plug-in hybrid system. The energy storage is recharged either by plugging the trucks in at night or by the truck's internal diesel engine.

The battery system eliminates engine noise while crews are working, facilitating better communication and providing safer working conditions. It

also reduces the amount of time workers are exposed to loud engine noise, which can reduce the risks of hearing loss.



Overall, these trucks will reduce fuel consumption, lower maintenance costs, decrease the carbon footprint of our fleet, lessen idle times and noise pollution at job sites, and provide a safer and healthier work environment. Look for our new vehicles as you drive through town this spring!

Dig Safe this April

April 22 is Earth Day—are you planning any outdoor projects? **Before you start digging, you must call 888.DIG.SAFE (or 811) 72 hours in advance.** Just one call starts the process of alerting all appropriate utilities in your area for your plans.

Dig Safe is a communications network that assists excavators, contractors, and property owners in complying with state law by notifying utilities before digging begins. The member utilities will then locate and mark their pipes, cables and other conduits. And the service is free!

Underground utilities exist everywhere, and (depending on the degree of soil erosion on your

property) they may be located 18” deep or less. A number of digging accidents in our area in recent years have underscored the importance of marking the location of underground facilities.

Dig Safe was established as a not-for-profit corporation—funded entirely by member utility companies—to promote public safety, protect vital utility services, and safeguard against property and environmental damage. Visit the Dig Safe website at www.digsafe.com for additional information, and remember to call before you dig—it's the law.

We'll plant two trees in your yard—and they're FREE

As a participant in American Public Power Association's TREE POWER initiative created in 1991, BELD is committed to beautifying our community while helping our customers save energy. That means we'll be planting trees for Braintree residents later this year. Since we began the Braintree Re-leaf program, we've planted more than 4,100 maple trees at no cost to the recipients. The young trees begin to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere right away, and in a few years their shade will help lower your home cooling costs. Interested? Contact Energy Advisor Ruth Slater at 781.348.1032 or rslater@beld.com. Please no repeat customers.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Spring household hazardous waste drop-off
Sat. 4/13, 9 a.m.–noon; 90 Pond St., www.braintreema.gov/recycling

6th Annual MHMS Family Fun Run
Sun. 5/5, 9 a.m., Braintree Town Hall, family-friendly 5K run and 1-mile fun run/walk. Prizes for top finishers; <https://mhmsfamilyfunrun.org>



www.beld.com
150 Potter Road
Braintree, MA 02184
781.348.BELD (2353)

BELD PAYMENT OPTIONS

Sign up for AutoPay at beld.com, or call 781.348.1001 to make a one-time payment

PAYMENT LOCATIONS

150 Potter Road
Mon-Fri: 7:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Th: 7:30 a.m.–7 p.m.
Drop boxes
Top of Potter Road
Beside Town Hall
Cash accepted only at
South Shore Bank
1010 Washington St.
372 Washington St.

BROADBAND HELPDESK

Mon-Fri: 8 a.m.–8 p.m.
S-S & holidays: 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

COMMISSION MEETINGS

Public meetings are usually held monthly. Call 781.348.2353 or check www.beld.com to confirm time and date.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Monday, April 15
Patriots' Day

COMMISSIONERS

Thomas Reynolds
Chairman



Anthony Agnitti
Vice Chair



James Regan
Secretary



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