# NHL Blackout Rules (Hockey)- Article no. 1533

## Introduction

- **NHL Blackout Rule Terms and Definitions**
    - If an NHL game is blacked out, and it is being carried locally, subscribers must tune to their **Regional Sports Network** (**RSN**) or local **Over The Air** (**OTA**) television station to see the game
    - **Member Club**: the NHL determines which NHL **Member Club** (team), if any, each cable system falls into, along with a corresponding Blackout Area
    - **The entire service area** of each cable system, even if servicing multiple cities / towns, must be blacked out for games with blackout restrictions

## Resolution Steps

- **NHL Blackout Rules**
- **50 Mile, Sphere, and Outer Blackouts**: every cable system's service area is designated as one of these blackout types

    - **50 Mile Blackout**

**50 Mile blackout area falls within the television territory of the local Over the Air** television station designated by the NHL, **Sphere of Influence**, and the **Regional Sports Network** carrying the game

This system must be blacked out of NHL games when any of the following blackout identifiers appear on the schedule

- **Example**: if a cable system in Atlanta, GA is within the Atlanta Thrashers Member Club area, and is assigned **50 Mile**, **Sphere**, or **Outer** as a blackout assignment, this cable system is blacked-out

- **Sphere Blackout**

When a cable system is designated as having a **Sphere blackout, it falls outside the 50 Mile blackout area (does not have a local Over-The-Air television station carrying the game), but is still designated by the NHL as a Sphere of Influence area for the local team and the Regional Sports Network carrying the game**

- **Example:** Dover, Delaware is within the Philadelphia Flyers Member Club area and is assigned a **Sphere** blackout assignment. When a **Sphere** or **Outer** blackout is required for a Philadelphia Flyers game, this system will be blacked-out

- **Outer Blackout**

When a cable system is designated as having an **Outer** blackout, it falls outside the **50 Mile** and **Sphere** blackout area, but within the television territory of the Regional Sports Network carrying the game. It must be blacked out of NHL games only when the identifier **Outer** appears on the schedule

- **Example**: a cable system in Tucson, AZ is determined to fall within the Phoenix Coyotes Member Club area and is assigned **Outer** as their blackout assignment. When there is an **Outer** blackout required for a Phoenix Coyotes game, this system is blacked-out

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