



To: Congressional Offices

From: James V. Wasilewski
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Office of Congressional Affairs

Subject: DTV Toolkit for Congressional Offices

As you know, America's full-power TV broadcast stations will convert to all-digital broadcasts at midnight on February 17, 2009. Consumers with analog-only televisions using "rabbit ears" or an outdoor antenna will need to choose how they will make this transition to digital television. Their options include: (1) subscribing to a pay television service; (2) purchasing a digital television set; or (3) purchasing a converter box that will enable their analog TV to receive digital broadcasts. Consumer information about the DTV transition is available through the Federal Communications Commission at www.dtv.gov and 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322).

The TV Converter Box Coupon Program (Coupon Program), established by Congress and administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), provides residential households with up to two \$40 coupons, each of which can be redeemed toward the purchase of an NTIA-certified converter box. Coupons can be ordered at www.DTV2009.gov or 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009) or by mail or fax. A limited number of coupons are available on a first-come, first-served basis. NTIA is urging consumers who plan to purchase a TV converter box to allow themselves at least six weeks to complete the following three steps:

1. **Apply** for coupons by no later than the end of the year;
2. **Buy** a converter box as soon as you receive your coupons; and
3. **Try** the converter box by hooking it up to your analog TV set in time to troubleshoot any potential problems.

NTIA is pleased to provide Members of Congress and their staff with information to assist in your outreach to constituents regarding the Coupon Program and the nation's transition to all-digital broadcasting. The attached "DTV Toolkit for Congressional Offices" (which is also available at www.ntia.doc.gov/congress) has been developed for this purpose and includes:

- A **"DTV Resource Guide"** containing valuable phone numbers and websites where you and your constituents can find in-depth information about the Coupon Program, the DTV transition generally, where to find information about antennas and other technical assistance, and organizations (with specific congressional contacts) that are engaged in

outreach to specific constituencies, especially seniors, minorities, the disabled, lower-income groups, and rural groups;

- A **FAQ** addressing questions such as: “When and why do coupons expire?”, “Do I need a converter box if I subscribe to cable?”, “Will I need a new antenna?”, “Can I replace a lost or stolen coupon?”, “Can residents of nursing homes apply for coupons?”, “Can I have coupons sent to a PO Box?”, and more;
- Updated lists of **Retailers Participating in the Coupon Program** and **Coupon-Eligible Converter Boxes**;
- Sample **DTV Town Hall Structure and Agenda** and **Newsletter**; and
- Printable **Coupon Applications** (including our new Nursing Home Resident Application), **Brochures** and **Fact Sheets** (including the FCC’s “Troubleshooting Guide”).

Also attached is a document identifying 45 priority markets that NTIA is targeting for high intensity outreach. These markets have been identified based upon their large number and/or percentage of over-the-air households, and/or their rank among the ten largest concentrations of vulnerable demographic groups, including minorities, rural residents, seniors, low-income groups and the disabled. Please take a look at the list to see if your district falls within one of these target markets. If it does, we encourage you to consider additional or expanded efforts to ensure your constituents are informed about the transition and the choices they need to make, preferably by no later than the end of the year.

NTIA has a limited number of brochures about the Coupon Program (which include the application) and would be pleased to send brochures to congressional offices, including district offices.

NTIA’s Office of Congressional Affairs also is happy to assist your office with specific cases regarding the Coupon Program. To ensure an expedited response, please send any inquiries by email to: congressionalaffairs@ntia.doc.gov. For additional information, please contact NTIA's Office of Congressional Affairs at 202-482-1551.



TV Converter Box Coupon Program



Target Markets

NTIA is targeting its consumer education messaging primarily to over-the-air (OTA) households. These households are, on average, more likely to be headed by low-income Americans, seniors, minorities, disabled individuals and rural residents. In its Consumer Education Plan, NTIA identified 45 priority markets targeted for high intensity outreach because of their large number and/or percentage of OTA households, and/or their rank among the ten largest concentrations of the Program’s target demographic groups (minorities, seniors, disabled, rural, low income). These markets, which are listed below, continue to be a primary focus of NTIA’s efforts and include 21 of the largest 25 markets as well as smaller markets with large percentages of OTA households.



45 Priority Markets

ALBUQUERQUE SANTA FE, NM	LAREDO, TX	PHOENIX, AZ
ANCHORAGE, AK	LOS ANGELES, CA	PORTLAND, OR
ATLANTA, GA	LUBBOCK, TX	SACRAMENTO STOCKTON MODESTO, CA
BOISE, ID	MIAMI FT. LAUDERDALE, FL	SALT LAKE CITY, UT
BOSTON MANCHESTER, MA - NH	MILWAUKEE, WI	SAN ANTONIO, TX
CHICAGO, IL	MINNEAPOLIS ST. PAUL, MN	SAN DIEGO, CA
DALLAS FT. WORTH, TX	FT. WAYNE, IN	SAN FRANCISCO OAKLAND SAN JOSE, CA
DENVER, CO	GREEN BAY APPLETON, WI	SEATTLE TACOMA, WA
DES MOINES AMES, IA	HARLINGEN MCALLEN BROWNSVILLE, TX	SOUTH BEND ELKHART BENTON HARBOR, IN
DETROIT, MI	HELENA, MT	SPRINGFIELD, MO
DULUTH SUPERIOR, MN	HONOLULU, HI	ST. LOUIS, MO
EL PASO, TX	HOUSTON, TX	TAMPA ST. PETERSBURG SARASOTA, FL
FAIRBANKS, AK	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	TULSA, OK
FRESNO VISALIA, CA	NEW YORK, NY	WASHINGTON, DC
JOPLIN PITTSBURG, MO – KS	PHILADELPHIA, PA	YUMA EL CENTRO, CA

DTV TRANSITION RESOURCE GUIDE

for Congressional Offices

DTV 101

Federal Communications Commission
DTV Transition Coalition 
National Association of Broadcasters
Consumer Electronics Association 

 1-888-CALL-FCC or www.DTV.gov
www.dtvtransition.org
www.dtvanswers.com
<http://digitaltips.org/video>

Questions Regarding...

Local Broadcast Signal Reception

Call Your Local TV Broadcaster

To Find #: <http://msi.tvjobs.com/quick.html>

Technical Assistance

(converter box installation, antennas)

1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)

www.antennaweb.org
www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html
www.mstv.org/converterbox

Cable TV and the DTV Transition

www.ncta.com

Low Power, Class A, and Translator Stations

www.lptvanswers.com

Converter Box Coupon Program

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

www.DTV2009.gov



Quick Links

To order a coupon: **1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)** or

Application for Nursing Home residents

Participating Local, National, Online & Phone Retailers

Certified Converter Boxes

FAQs

Partner Tool Kit (consumer education aids)

Weekly Status Update

Coupon Statistics (requests and redemptions, incl. by state & zip)

www.dtv2009.gov

https://www.dtv2009.gov/docs/NursingHomeCouponApplication_en.pdf

www.dtv2009.gov/vendorsearch.aspx

www.dtv2009.gov/Boxes.aspx

<https://www.dtv2009.gov/FAQ.aspx>

www.dtv2009.gov/Partners.aspx

www.dtv2009.gov/stats.aspx

https://www.ntiadtv.gov/coupon_stats.cfm

Outreach to Seniors

Dept. of Health & Human Services / Administration on Aging (AOA)

www.AOA.gov



Carol Crecy (202) 357-3505

Moya Benoit Thompson (202) 357-3507

National Association for Area Agencies on Aging (N4A)

www.N4A.org



Sandy Markwood (202) 872-0888

Keeping Seniors Connected

(Coalition of 11 national aging organizations)

Amy Gotwals (202) 872-0888, x8884

AARP



www.AARP.org

Debra Berlyn (202) 434-3824

American Library Association (ALA)



www.ALA.org

Emily Sheketoff or Andy Bridges (202) 628-8410

Outreach to Minorities

National Association of Latino Elected Officials (NALEO)



Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR)



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)



National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)



Community Action Partnership (CAP)



www.NALEO.org

William A. Ramos
(202) 546-2536

www.civilrights.org

Erica Swanson
(202) 263-2859

www.NAACP.org

Hilary Shelton
(202) 463-2940

<http://www.NCAI.org>

April Hale
(202) 721-1390

www.communityactionpartnership.com

Lisa Holland
(202) 265-7546

Outreach to Rural Communities

National Association of Counties (NACO)



National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA)



www.NACO.org

Jeff Arnold
(202) 942-4286

www.NATOA.org

Libby Beaty
(703) 519-8035

Outreach to the Disabled

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)



American Council on the Blind (ACB)



National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM) (Closed Captioning)



National Association of the Deaf



www.AAPD.com

Jennifer Simpson
(202) 457-0046

www.ACB.org

Eric Bridges
(202) 467-5081

<http://ncam.wgbh.org>

Larry Goldberg
(617) 300-3722

www.NAD.org

Rosaline Crawford
(301) 587-7730

TV Converter Box Coupon Program

Frequently Asked Questions



What is a TV converter box?

A TV converter box plugs into your analog TV and, along with your antenna, enables you to view digital broadcast (not cable or satellite) television signals over your analog set, now and after full-power analog signals cease on February 17, 2009. A TV converter box is a one-time purchase and typically costs between \$45 and \$80. A TV connected to cable, satellite or other pay TV service does not require a TV converter box from this program. For a list of TV converter boxes that can be purchased with \$40 government coupons, please visit www.dtv2009.gov.

What is the TV Converter Box Coupon Program?

Congress created the TV Converter Box Coupon Program (under Title III of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006) for households wishing to keep using their analog sets after February 17, 2009 to receive broadcast TV. The Coupon Program allows U.S. households to obtain up to two coupons, each worth \$40, which can be redeemed toward the cost of eligible converter boxes.

Can I start using a TV converter box now or do I need to wait until after February 17, 2009 for it to work?

Consumers can begin enjoying the benefits of digital television TODAY and are urged to allow at least six weeks to APPLY for a coupon, BUY a converter box and TRY it out – connect it to their analog TV; follow the set-up instructions, including channel seeking; and perform antenna adjustments, if necessary. NTIA urges consumers to apply for coupons by **no later than the end of the year**.

Do I need a converter box if I have cable or satellite?

No. TVs connected to cable, satellite, or other pay services *do not* require – and will not operate with – a TV converter box from this program. Check with your cable or satellite provider to determine how they will support your analog set after February 17, 2009.

How do I get my coupons?

Consumers can apply for up to two \$40 coupons per household by going online at www.dtv2009.gov, calling 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), or mailing an application to PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000. As required by law, coupons are mailed via US Postal Service and expire 90 days after they are mailed. Consumers can apply for coupons until March 31, 2009, or until funds are exhausted. Most coupons arrive within 3 to 4 weeks from the date they are requested. Consumers can check the status of their request online at www.DTV2009.gov/CheckStatus.aspx.

When and why do coupons expire?

By law, coupons expire 90 days after they are issued. The expiration date of a coupon is imprinted directly on the coupon. Consumers should redeem their coupon toward the purchase a converter box as soon as possible after receiving their coupon in the mail. The coupon expiration requirement is necessary to permit funds otherwise obligated to unredeemed and expired coupons to be “recycled” for new coupons.

Questions and Technical Assistance

• **1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)**

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html>

• **Call Your Local TV Station**

(To find, go to: <http://msi.tvjobs.com/quick.html>)

• **Consult a Consumer Electronics Retailer**

To Order Coupons

www.dtv2009.gov

1-888-DTV-2009

(1-888-388-2009)

*NTIA urges you to apply by the
end of the year!*



Where can I redeem my coupons?

There are more than 35,000 participating retailers, including seven of the largest national consumer electronics retail chains, and more than 45 online and phone retailers. To see a complete list, and to search local retailers by zip code, go online to www.dtv2009.gov. When the coupon is mailed, it includes an insert with a list of nearby participating retailers. Consumers should investigate their options and call ahead to confirm availability of coupon-eligible converter boxes on the day you plan to shop.

Can I replace a lost or stolen coupon?

No. Coupons cannot be reissued. If you have requested only one coupon, you may request another. If both coupons have been lost or stolen, or you have requested both coupons, used one, and the other coupon is lost or stolen, by law we are unable to reissue coupon replacements. However, individuals may obtain a coupon – so long as it is not bought or sold – from a family member, friend or neighbor.

Can I obtain a coupon from someone else or give my coupon away?

Yes. It is permissible for someone to give away their coupon for free to a family member, friend, or neighbor. Please note that it is against the law to buy or sell a coupon.

Can I receive coupons at a Post Office Box?

Yes. The Coupon Program regulations recently were modified to permit any eligible household that has not already been issued two coupons to have their coupon(s) mailed to a Post Office Box. Applicants who utilize a P.O. Box for residential mail delivery must provide their physical residential address as well as their P.O. Box address, and can request up to two coupons through any of the Program's application channels.

Are residents of nursing homes eligible to participate in the Coupon Program?

Yes. Individuals residing in state-licensed nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, and assisted living facilities are now eligible to receive one coupon. A nursing home resident (or a family member or administrator of the State-licensed facility) may apply by mail for one coupon for the resident, and the coupon will be mailed directly to the nursing home resident. The mail-in application for nursing home residents is available at:

https://www.dtv2009.gov/docs/NursingHomeCouponApplication_en.pdf

Will I need a new antenna?

As long as a DTV signal is available, a consumer's existing antenna should still work after the transition is complete. Consumers are urged to TRY their converter box as soon as possible to troubleshoot potential problems and to contact their local broadcasters and go to www.antennaweb.org and <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html> for additional information regarding reception of local stations and antennas.

Where can I get technical assistance, if needed?

When installing a converter box, consumers should follow the instructions included in their owner's manual, including a channel search, and make any needed antenna adjustments. Doing so right away is important to troubleshooting potential problems well before the February 17, 2009, analog shut-off. Consumers needing additional assistance – with converter box installation or questions about DTV signal availability and reception – should consult their local consumer electronic retailer, call their local broadcaster(s), call the FCC's consumer hotline (1-888-225-5322) and/or go to

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html>.

Questions and Technical Assistance

• **1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)**

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/troubleshootguide.html>

• **Call Your Local TV Station**

(To find, go to: <http://msi.tvjobs.com/quick.html>)

• **Consult a Consumer Electronics Retailer**

To Order Coupons

www.dtv2009.gov

1-888-DTV-2009

(1-888-388-2009)

*NTIA urges you to apply by the
end of the year!*

Participating Retailers – Local, National, Phone and Online



National Retailers

- Best Buy
- Circuit City
- Kmart
- RadioShack
- Sears
- Target
- Walmart

Online Retailers

- A1activations at www.a1activations.com
- All American Direct at www.allamericandirect.com
- Amazon.com at www.amazon.com
- Antennas Direct at www.antennasdirect.com
- Broadband Solution's BSAT e-shop at <http://dtv.bsat.net>
- Bruce's Antenna Systems at www.watchdigitaltv.com
- Cadence Sound System at www.mytvconverter.com
- Cerebral Cortech at www.freetvsignal.com
- Compu Parts and More at www.compupartsandmore.com
- CompUSA at www.compusa.com
- Consumer Electronics Group at www.consumereleccgroup.com
- Direct Depot at www.directdepot.net
- DISH Network at www.dtvpal.com
- Ditec at www.cheapdigitalconverters.com
- DTV Box Answers at www.dtvboxanswers.com
- E & E Electronics at www.digitalstar.com
- eIndustries.biz at www.eindustries.biz
- Gridlink Technologies at www.egridlink.com
- Happy Iguana at www.tvconverterboxstore.com
- Home Theater Consultants at www.analog2digital.tv
- iNet at Access@ezdtv.com
- Infotel Distributors at www.infoteldistributors.com
- JtecDirect at www.jtecdirect.com
- Logic Mart at www.kingboxinc.com
- Meritline at www.meritline.com
- Microtel Systems at www.convertdtvnow.com
- Mosquito Productions at FreeDTVShop.com
- Newcast at www.newcaststore.com
- QVC at www.QVC.com
- Satellite Radio Superstore at www.digital-tv-converter.net
- SavingLots at www.savinglots.com
- Skyview at www.skyviewf2a.com
- Solid Signal at www.solidsignal.com/dtv2009/
- SummitSource at www.summitsource.com
- The Twister Group at www.thetwistergroup.com
- TigerDirect at www.tigerdirect.com
- Velocity Technologies, Inc. at www.velocitystore.com
- Winegard at www.WinegardDirect.com

Phone Retailers

- A1activations at 800-670-0388
- All American Direct at 1-800-249-1063
- Best Buy DTV Hotline and Order Center at 1-877-BBY-DTV9 (1-877-229-3889)
- Circuit City at 888-280-9382
- DISH Network at 888-638-9912
- Etronics at 1-800-323-7669
- Fingerhut at 1-888-301-5606
- iNet Access at 877-388-7010
- Online Electronics Liquidation at 800-717-1635
- RadioShack DTV Telephone Order Center at 1-877-RS-DTV-4U (1-877-773-8848)
- Satellite Radio Superstore at 800-513-8554
- Solid Signal at 1-866-3SIGNAL (1-866-374-4625)

There are nearly 35,000 participating retail outlets. To find retailers in your area (by zip), go to: www.dtv2009.gov/VendorSearch.aspx:

Locate Retailers Near You

To locate a converter box retailer in your local area, please supply the following information.
*Items marked with an asterisk are required.

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address	Apt#
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
City	State
<input type="text"/>	Zip*

miles

Search Distance

Consumers should investigate their options and call ahead to confirm availability of coupon-eligible converter boxes.

NTIA-Approved Converter Boxes



NTIA-Approved & Available

These NTIA-approved CECBs currently are available in retail stores, according to manufacturers and retailers. Consumers should call ahead to retailers to make sure that the boxes are in stock.

ALPHA DIGITAL AT2016	DIGITAL STEAM DSP6500C *	Magnavox TB100MW9A *
APEX DT250 *	DIGITAL STREAM DSP7500T	Magnavox TB110MW9 *
Access HD DTA1020D	DIGITAL STREAM DSP7700P *	Magnavox TB110MW9A *
Access HD DTA1020U	DIGITAL STREAM DSP7700T *	MaxMedia LuTRO *
AccessHD DTA1010D	DIGITAL STREAM DTX9900	Memorex MVCB1000 *
AccessHD DTA1010U	DIGITAL STREAM DTX9900D	MicroGEM MG2000
AccessHD DTA1030D *	DIGITAL STREAM DTX9950 *	Philco TB100HH9 *
AccessHD DTA1050D *	DIGITAL STREAM DX8700 *	Philco TB150HH9 *
AccessHD DTA1080D *	DISH NETWORK TR-40CRA *	RCA DTA 800B
Airlink101® ATVC101	DISH Network DTVPal *	RCA DTA800B1 *
Apex DT1001	Dish Network DTVPal Plus *	SUNKEY SK-801ATSC *
Artec T3A	GE 22729	Sansonic FT300A
Artec T3AP Pro *	GE 22730	Tivax STB-T8 *
Artec T3APro	GE 23333 *	Tivax STB-T9
CADENCE DTVC-9	GE 23334 *	VENTURER STB7766G
CASTi CAX-03 *	Goodmind DTA1000	Venturer STB7766G1 *
COSHIP N9900T	Gridlink GLT-200	WINEGARD RC-DT09
COSHIP N9901T *	Insignia NS-DXA1	Winegard RC DT09A *
COSHIP N9988T	Insignia NS-DXA1-APT *	Zenith DTT900
CRAIG Electronics Int'l Ltd. CVD506 *	Kingbox K8V1	Zenith DTT901 *
Channel Master CM-7000	Lasonic LTA-260	Zentech DF2000
Cleartech CT DCB100A *	Magnavox TB-100MG9 *	ZINWELL ZAT-970
ComponexX CX-900A *	Magnavox TB100MW9	ZINWELL ZAT-970A *
		ZINWELL ZAT-857

* Includes analog pass-through capability

NTIA-Approved & Not Currently Available

These NTIA-approved CECBs currently are NOT available in retail stores, according to manufacturers and retailers.

AMTC AT-2016	Artec T3AP-LS *	Digital Rising SBTX01A *	MAG CCB7701	Skardin DTR-0727
AMTC AT2001	CASTi CAX-01	Digital Rising SBTX02 *	Magnavox TB100MW9 *	Skardin DTR-0727L *
AMTC AT2001L *	CASTi CAX-02 *	Digital Stream DSP7700A *	MaxMedia MMDTVB03	Skardin DTR-0728L *
AMTC AT2015	CHANGHONG ATT888 *	Digital Stream DSP7700C *	Microprose MPI-500	Skardin DTR-0729L *
AMTC AT2016L *	COMPONEXX CX-900	ECHOSTAR TR-40 *	Microprose MPI-500PT *	Sylvania DTA1040D *
APEX DT150	CRAIG A4108	Fuyai ATSC 630	Mustek MAT-K50	Sylvania DTA1040U *
APEX DT502 *	CRAIG CVD508 *	Fuyai ATSC 630A *	OLEVIA DTA100	Synergy Global Supply SYN2009
APEX DT502A *	Clear Tech CTDCB100	GoodMind DTA1100S *	Oxford Digital ATS-00101-OUS *	TATUNG TDB3001 *
ARENA DT 700 *	DAYTEK CAX-01	GoodMind DTA1100BS *	Philco TB100HH9 *	TATUNG TDB3000
AVION ATB 7707	DAYTEK CAX-03 *	Goodmind DTA1100 *	PrimeDTV PHD-096 *	Tunbow Electronics E60010
AccessHD DTA1020AD *	DENCA NL8118	Goodmind DTA1100B *	RCA DTA 800A	Venturer STB7766B *
AccessHD DTA1020AU *	DENCA NL9119	Goodmind DTA1100Y *	RCA DTA809 *	Venturer STB7766C *
AccessHD DTA1030U *	DENCA TBX1005A	Goodmind DTA900	RCA DTA809L *	ZINWELL ZAT-856
AccessHD DTA1050U *	DIGITAL STREAM D2A1D10	Goodmind DTA980	SPICA AT 2018 *	ZINWELL ZAT-950A *
AccessHD DTA1080U *	DIGITAL STREAM D2A1D20	HOME.TEL RC-HT888L *	SUMC LSA-801L *	Zentech EZTV DF2000L *
Airlink101 ATVC102 *	DIGITAL STREAM DSP6500R	Hualu A5108 *	SVA DAC100	Zinwell ZAT-756A
Apex DT1002	Daewoo DAC-100	Jiuzhou DTT6000	Sansonic FT-310A	Zinwell ZAT-950
Apex DT500 *	Desay ATSC 8000	Jiuzhou DTT9001 *	Sansonic FT-320A *	iNet Access SSR 1921 *
Artec T3AP *	Desay ATSC 8008 *	Kingbox K8V8	Sansonic PS-600RT *	iNet Access SSR 2100A
Artec T3AP Pro-LS *	Desay ATSC 8008 *	Lasonic LTR-260	Sansonic QS-800CT *	iNet Access SSR 3909A *
				jWIN Electronic Corp JD-TV1000

Consumer Guide to the TV Converter Box Coupon Program

3 Steps – 6 Weeks



If you rely on a rooftop antenna or 'rabbit ears,' a TV converter box is one option to transition to digital television on or before February 17, 2009. The Federal government is offering all U.S. households up to two \$40 coupons to help pay for the cost of TV converter boxes. **APPLY TODAY** for your coupon, or before the end of the year.

To keep your analog TV working, follow these 3 steps, which may take at least 6 weeks:



Apply TODAY for your coupon, which will help you purchase a government certified converter box. Coupons are available on a first come, first served basis. To apply, go to www.DTV2009.gov, call 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), mail to PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208 or fax 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632).



Buy your coupon-eligible converter box. **COUPONS EXPIRE 90 days** after they are mailed. Expired coupons cannot be reissued or replaced. A list of retailers will come in the envelope with your coupons.



Try your converter box as soon as you get it home. Hook-up your converter box to start watching digital television or to troubleshoot potential problems. The converter box instructions may include a toll free line for help setting up your box. If you experience poor reception, contact your local television station. For general information about the DTV transition, visit www.DTV.gov or call 1-888-CALL-FCC (voice) or 1-888-TELL-FCC (TTY).



Produced by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Guía del consumidor Programa de Cupones Para Caja Convertidora de Televisor



3 pasos – 6 semanas

Si usted depende de una “antena fijada” o “de techo” para ver su televisor, la caja convertidora es una opción para la transición a la televisión digital, en o antes del 17 de febrero, 2009. El gobierno federal les está ofreciendo a todos los hogares estadounidenses hasta dos cupones de \$40, como ayuda para comprar la caja convertidora. SOLICITE HOY su cupón o antes de que termine el año.

Para que su televisor análogo siga funcionando, siga estos tres pasos, cuya realización pudiera demorar al menos 6 semanas:

SOLICITE



Solicite HOY su cupón, que le ayudará a comprar una caja convertidora certificada por el gobierno. Los cupones se enviarán por orden de llegada de los pedidos. Para solicitarlos, visite el sitio Web www.DTV2009.gov, llame al número telefónico 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), envíe la solicitud por correo: PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208; o pídales por fax al número 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632).

COMPRE



Compre su caja convertidora elegible para uso con su cupón. Los CUPONES SE VENCEN a los 90 días después de haberse enviado por correo postal. Una vez vencidos, no se podrán reexpedir ni reemplazar. En el mismo sobre de los cupones, le enviaremos una relación de los establecimientos donde podrá adquirir la caja convertidora.

PRUEBE



Pruebe la caja convertidora en cuanto llegue a su hogar. Conecte la caja convertidora para disfrutar de la televisión digital o para solucionar cualquier problema potencial. En el folleto de instrucciones de la caja convertidora podrá encontrar un número telefónico gratuito donde podrán ayudarle con la conexión. Si la recepción es deficiente, póngase en contacto con su canal de televisión local. Para obtener información general acerca de la transición a la televisión digital, visite el sitio Web www.DTV.gov o llame al número telefónico 1-888-CALL-FCC (voz) o 1-888-TELL-FCC (TTY).



Producido por el Departamento de Comercio de los Estados Unidos.



**TV CONVERTER BOX
COUPON PROGRAM**
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000

Apply online:
www.DTV2009.gov



Apply by phone:
1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

Deaf or hard of hearing callers:
1-877-530-2634 TTY - English
1-866-495-1161 TTY - Spanish

Fax applications to:
1-877-DTV-4ME2

Mail applications to:
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208

**ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE
SUBMITTED BY MARCH 31, 2009.**

COUPON APPLICATION All information must be filled out. Please type or print clearly.
This Application is to apply for a \$40 Coupon which can be used towards the purchase of a TV converter box.

1. Your Name and Address.

NAME			
	First	Middle	Last
HOME ADDRESS			
	Street Address		Apt #
	City	State	Zip

If the US Post Office does not deliver mail to your Home Address, provide as much information as you can above regarding your Home Address and provide your Mailing Address below.

MAILING ADDRESS			
<i>If different than above</i>	Street Address - or - P.O. Box #		Apt #
	City	State	Zip

- 2. TV Service:** Check the statement below that best describes your household.
- All or some of the TVs in my house are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.
 - None of the TVs in my house are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.

3. Coupons Requested: How many coupons do you want? ONE - OR - TWO

4. Signature: By signing below, you declare that the above is true and correct.

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), unless that collection displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Information collected using this form will not be sold.



**PROGRAMA DE CUPONES PARA CAJA
CONVERTIDORA DE TELEVISOR**
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000

Solicítelo en línea:
www.DTV2009.gov

Solicítelo por teléfono:
1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

Envíe su solicitud por fax al:
1-877-DTV-4ME2

Envíe su solicitud por correo al:
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208

Las personas con
problemas de audición:
1-877-530-2634 TTY - inglés
1-866-495-1161 TTY - español



**TODAS LAS SOLICITUDES DEBEN
PRESENTARSE ANTES DEL 31 DE
MARZO DE 2009.**

SOLICITUD DE CUPÓN Debe proporcionar toda la información. Escriba con letra de molde o a máquina. Esta Solicitud es para pedir un Cupón de \$40 que puede usarse en la compra de una caja convertidora de televisor.

1. Su nombre y dirección.

NOMBRE

DIRECCIÓN PARTICULAR	1er. Nombre	2do. Nombre	Apellido
-----------------------------	-------------	-------------	----------

	Número y calle		# de Apto.
--	----------------	--	------------

	Ciudad	Estado	Código Postal
--	--------	--------	---------------

Si la Oficina de Correos de EE. UU. no entrega su correspondencia en su Dirección particular, proporcione la mayor información posible en relación con su Dirección particular y escriba su Dirección postal a continuación.

DIRECCIÓN POSTAL

<i>Si es distinta a la anterior.</i>	Número y Calle - o - P.O. Box #	# de Apto.
--------------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------

	Ciudad	Estado	Código Postal
--	--------	--------	---------------

2. Servicio de TV: Marque una de las oraciones mostradas a continuación que mejor describa a su hogar.

Todos o algunos de los televisores en mi casa están conectados a uno o más servicios pagados, tales como cable o satélite.

Ninguno de los televisores en mi casa está conectado a uno o más servicios pagados, tales como cable o satélite.

3. Cupones solicitados: ¿Cuántos cupones desea? UNO - O - DOS

4. Firma: Mediante su firma al calce, usted declara que lo anterior es veraz y correcto.

Firma	Fecha
-------	-------



TV CONVERTER BOX COUPON PROGRAM

PO Box 2530, Portland, OR 97208-2530



This application is to allow residents of licensed nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, or assisted living facilities to apply for one (1) forty dollar coupon which can be used towards the purchase of an eligible TV converter box. This form can be completed by or on behalf of an eligible resident of an eligible licensed facility. If the application is approved, one (1) coupon will be mailed to the nursing home resident at the facility where they reside.

Mail applications to:
PO Box 2530, Portland, OR 97208-2530

**ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE
SUBMITTED BY MARCH 31, 2009.**

COUPON APPLICATION All information must be filled out. Please type or print clearly. This application is to apply for one (1) \$40 coupon which can be used toward the purchase of an eligible TV converter box to be connected to a television set individually owned by the Facility Resident listed below.

1. Name and Address: Provide the name of the individual who would like to receive a coupon and the name and address of the Facility where the individual resides.

**NAME OF
INDIVIDUAL**

First M.I. Last

**NAME OF FACILITY*
WHERE APPLICANT RESIDES**

**ADDRESS OF FACILITY*
WHERE APPLICANT RESIDES**

Address Room/Unit #

City State Zip

If you are an administrator of a nursing home, intermediate care, or assisted living facility and would like to apply for more than one resident, you may provide the name, room number, and TV Service statement (see below) of each resident as an attachment to this application.

* The term "Facility" in this application includes nursing homes, intermediate care, or assisted living facilities.

2. TV Service: Check the statement below that best describes the facility resident.

- All or some of my TVs in my room are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.
- None of my TVs in my room are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.

3. Signature: I hereby certify that the nursing home or facility listed above is a state-licensed nursing home, intermediate care facility, or assisted living facility and that the information provided here is true and correct.

Printed Name of Person Completing the Form

Signature

Date

Suggested Town Hall Meeting Structure and Sample Schedule

A typical DTV town hall proceeds on this basic timeline:

- 3-5 minutes: Congressman (or staff) gives introductory remarks and introduces the guests.
- 10-15 Minutes: FCC Speaker gives an overview of the DTV transition in general and what affected communities can do to make the transition.
- 10-15 Minutes: NTIA speaker discusses all aspects of the TV Converter Box Coupon Program.
- 5-15 Minutes: Panel of local broadcasters discusses their plans for the transition, and how viewers in certain areas may be affected.
- 5-10 Minutes: Local retailers can provide a perspective into what the coupons will buy and retail availability of converter boxes. They may also present the other options for making the transition to digital.
- 5-10 Minutes: Community service groups can speak about what they can do to help vulnerable communities in making the transition.
- 30-40 Minutes: Questions and Answers.

Recommended Participants:

Federal Communications Commission (FCC): One of two federal agencies with primary responsibility for the DTV transition, the FCC can provide an overview of the DTV transition and the benefits it offers to your constituents, and what individuals may (or may not) need to do to prepare for February 17, 2009. *Contact: FCC Congressional Affairs.*

National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA): NTIA, an agency within the Department of Commerce, is responsible for administering the DTV Converter Box Coupon Program and can provide detailed information about the Coupon Program. *Contact: NTIA Congressional Affairs.*

Local Broadcasters: Each local market has a different broadcast television landscape, the local broadcasters (commercial and public) can provide information on the specific actions local stations are taking in making the transition. The DTV Transition Coalition has a speakers bureau which can provide speakers, including local broadcasters. *Contact: NAB Congressional Affairs; DTV Transition Coalition.*

Local Retailers: Local retailers can provide information about the converter box options that are available in their market area, as well as what other related services they offer (e.g., installation assistance, help with antennas, etc.) to help consumers make the smoothest possible transition. *Contact: Consumer Electronics Retailers Association.*

Community service organizations: Local leaders, including churches, food banks, 4H, Boy Scouts, Local Area Agencies on Aging, AARP and others are many of the groups that can help with outreach to the most vulnerable communities (seniors, disabled, minorities, low-income, rural and tribal populations, etc.). These groups can speak at the town hall, but should also be invited as listeners because they can pass the information down through the community. *Contact: DTV Transition Coalition, NTIA Congressional Affairs, FCC Congressional Affairs.*



PLACE
STAMP
HERE

TV CONVERTER BOX COUPON PROGRAM

P.O. Box 2000
Portland, OR 97208-2000



ARE YOU READY FOR THE DTV CONVERSION?



*An Important Announcement
for TV Viewers from*

CONGRESSMAN TOM COLE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

PUBLIC DOCUMENT • OFFICIAL BUSINESS

*This mailing was prepared, published
and mailed at taxpayer expense.*



Tom Cole
M.C.
PRSR STD

Please fold along the above line, tape closed, affix postage and mail.



**Official Digital
Converter Box
Coupon Application**

SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS

**DO NOT REQUEST A CONVERTER BOX COUPON UNLESS YOU HAVE AN
ANALOG TV AND GET RECEPTION THROUGH AN OVER-THE-AIR ANTENNA**

Congressman Tom Cole

Serving the 4th District of Oklahoma

**Your Guide to the
Digital Television Transition**



In an effort to open up more emergency communication channels for police, fire and rescue personnel, Congress passed legislation requiring all full-power broadcast TV stations to end their analog transmissions and switch to a digital format by **February 17, 2009**. That format switch has been called the "DTV transition." This guide will help you understand how it will affect you.

Tom Cole

About the Digital TV Transition



The change to Digital Television should be a smooth and easy transition. It will cost most TV consumers very little or nothing at all. In fact, Congress created the TV Converter Box Coupon Program for households wishing to keep using their analog TV sets after February 17, 2009. The Coupon Program allows households to receive up to two \$40 coupons that can be applied toward the cost of eligible converter boxes. The coupons are available from January 1, 2008, until March 31, 2009.

How does this affect me?

- 1. If you get TV from a cable, satellite, or telephone company,** your provider will handle the transition for you. I encourage you to contact your service provider with any questions.
- 2. If you are using an analog television manufactured after March 1, 2007, or a digital television,** you do not need to take any action.
- 3. If you are using an older analog television with an over-the-air antenna** ("rabbit ears" or rooftop), after February 17, 2009, you must:
 - a) subscribe to a cable, satellite, or telephone provider for TV service;
 - b) purchase a digital television; or
 - c) obtain a converter box.

** Converter boxes are expected to cost between \$40 and \$70. The government is making up to two \$40 coupons per household available to those who want help purchasing the converters.

** Because not all low-power broadcasters are converting to digital, a number of converter boxes pass through analog programming as well as convert digital programming. For a list of all coupon-eligible converter boxes, including those that pass through analog signals, please visit www.ntiadv.gov/cecb_list.cfm. If you are unsure whether any of the broadcast channels you watch are low-power, please contact your local stations.

How do I request coupons from the TV Converter Box Coupon Program?

- 1. Online.** Apply online at www.dtv2009.gov
- 2. By mail.** Fill out the attached coupon application and mail to: P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208
- 3. By fax.** Fax the attached coupon application to 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632)
- 4. By phone.** Call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline at 1-888-DTV-2009, or TTY 1-877-530-2634

Do I need to buy a HDTV?

NO. If you decide to shop for a new digital TV, remember you **do not** need a "high definition" TV (HDTV) to view free over-the-air digital programming. A HDTV is only necessary if you want to view digital programming in "high definition."

DO NOT REQUEST A CONVERTER BOX COUPON UNLESS YOU HAVE AN ANALOG TV AND GET RECEPTION THROUGH AN OVER-THE-AIR ANTENNA



**TV CONVERTER BOX
COUPON PROGRAM**
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000



Apply online:
www.DTV2009.gov

Apply by phone:
1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)

Fax applications to:
1-877-DTV-4ME2

Mail applications to:
PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208

TTY: **1-877-530-2634** (English)
1-866-495-1161 (Spanish)

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COUPON APPLICATION All information must be filled out. Please type or print clearly.
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1. Your Name and Address.

NAME	_____		
	First	Middle	Last
HOME ADDRESS	_____		
	Street Address		Apt #

	City	State	Zip

If the US Post Office does not deliver mail to your Home Address, provide as much information as you can above regarding your Home Address and provide your Mailing Address below.

MAILING ADDRESS	_____		
<i>If different than above</i>	Street Address - or - P.O. Box #		Apt #

	City	State	Zip

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- All or some of the TVs in my house are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.
- None of the TVs in my house are connected to one or more pay services, such as cable or satellite.

3. Coupons Requested: How many coupons do you want? ONE - OR - TWO

4. Signature: By signing below, you declare that the above is true and correct.

Signature Date

Preparing Your City for the Transition to Digital Television



Town halls

Host town hall events with local elected officials to answer questions about DTV and provide additional information about the transition.



City government phone systems

Record informational DTV messages for callers placed on hold.



Sporting events

Play PSAs and make DTV announcements over the public address systems at stadiums and arenas.



Community events and expos

Sponsor DTV information tables at fairs, conferences and expos around the city.



Government paystubs

Print DTV announcements and helpful contact information on government paystubs.



Closed-circuit televisions

Play PSAs and other DTV informational videos on closed-circuit television loops at the DMV, department of corrections, library, city hall, courthouse and other city service buildings.



Collateral distribution

Provide DTV collateral materials to senior centers, libraries and other city government buildings for public distribution.



Media outreach

Have high-ranking city officials submit columns to local newspapers outlining the steps residents must take to maintain their television service.



City Web site

Create a DTV information portal on the city's Web site.

Helpful Resources

Speakers and Speeches

City officials interested in having a DTV transition speaker address area residents may contact the DTV Speakers Bureau at dtvspeak@crosbyvolmer.com or 877-MY-DTV-09.

Sample DTV speeches are also available for download at dtvanswers.com/toolkit.

PSAs and Informational Videos

Copies of PSAs and other DTV informational videos are available by contacting Mike DiSerio (mdiserio@nab.org) with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB).

Collateral and E-Content

Sample collateral pieces and other electronic materials including resource guides, flyers, brochures, Q&As and banner ads are available for download at dtvanswers.com/toolkit.

Officials can also obtain boxes of 600 brochures by contacting Abbi Stuaan (astuaan@nab.org) with NAB.

The digital television (DTV) transition refers to the requirement that all full-power television broadcast stations stop broadcasting in analog format and broadcast only in digital format after February 17, 2009. Broadcast stations in all U.S. markets are currently broadcasting in both analog and digital. If you are having difficulty receiving digital broadcast stations in your area, this troubleshooting guide provides a connections checklist and tips on reception of digital signals.

Check Your Connections

- Check that your digital-to-analog converter box or digital television is connected properly. Make sure your antenna is connected to the antenna input of your digital-to-analog converter box or digital television. If using a digital-to-analog converter box, also ensure that the antenna output of your converter box is connected to the antenna input of your analog TV. Refer to the owner's manuals of your components if you are unsure of the proper connections.
- Ensure that your components are plugged in and have their power turned on.
- If you have a digital-to-analog converter box, tune your analog TV to channel 3. You should see a set-up menu or picture displayed on your TV screen. If you do not see a set-up menu or picture, tune your TV to channel 4. If you still do not see a set-up menu or picture, recheck your connections.

Perform a Channel Scan

- Digital-to-analog converter boxes and digital televisions have a button, usually on the remote control, that is labeled "set-up" or "menu" or some similar term. Press that button to access the set-up menu. Using the directional arrow buttons on your remote, scroll to the option that allows you to perform a "channel scan." The channel scan will search for digital broadcast channels that are available in your area. Consult the owner's manual of your digital-to-analog converter box or digital television for detailed instructions on how to perform a channel scan for your device.
- Once the channel scan is complete, you will be able to tune to the digital channels received by your antenna. **You should perform a channel scan periodically to check whether additional digital channels have become available.**

Adjust Your Antenna

- Small adjustments to your antenna can make a big difference in the number of digital channels you can receive. If you have an indoor antenna, try elevating it and moving it closer to an exterior wall of your home. After adjusting your antenna, perform another channel scan to see if your reception is improved.
- While adjusting your antenna, it may be helpful to access the "signal strength meter" on your digital-to-analog converter box or digital television to determine whether your adjustments are improving the signals' strength. The signal strength meter is usually accessed through the menu feature on your remote control. Refer to the owner's manual of your device for detailed instructions on how to access its signal strength meter. Remember to do another channel scan after you have adjusted your antenna.
- Television stations broadcasting in digital use both the VHF band (channels 2-13) and UHF band (channels 14-51). Many indoor antennas use "rabbit ears" for the VHF band and a "loop" or "bow-tie" antenna for the UHF band. Make sure you are using an antenna that covers both the VHF and UHF bands and have connected it properly.



If You are Still Having Difficulty:

- Until February 17, 2009, some stations will be operating at reduced power levels. If you are not receiving certain digital TV stations, this does not necessarily mean there is a problem with your antenna or digital-to-analog converter box or digital television. Check with the TV station to find out whether they are planning changes that will improve reception.
- When an analog TV signal is weak or receives interference, static, snow, and distortion will often appear on the screen. Digital broadcasting will provide a clear picture; however, if the signal falls below a certain minimum strength, the picture can disappear. This “cliff effect” means that if you watch analog TV stations that have static and distortion, you may have to adjust or upgrade your antenna system.
- Simple indoor antennas provide minimal performance that may not be suitable for your location. If you are unable to obtain satisfactory reception with your current indoor antenna, you may wish to obtain an indoor antenna that includes features for better reception of UHF signals and/or an amplifier to boost the received signal (often referred to as an active indoor antenna).
- Generally, an outdoor antenna will get better reception than an indoor antenna. However, the performance of outdoor antennas can degrade over time due to exposure to the weather. If you are having problems, check for loose or corroded wiring, broken antenna elements and that the antenna is pointed in the right direction.
- Try to keep the length of wire between your antenna and digital-to-analog converter box or digital television as short as possible for best reception.
- “Splitters” that are used to connect a single antenna to multiple digital-to-analog converter boxes or digital televisions reduce the amount of signal available to each device. If you are having problems, check whether reception is improved without the splitter. In some cases an “active” splitter that includes an amplifier can solve the problem.
- If you are near a station’s broadcast tower, reception of that station, as well as other stations, can be impeded by signal “overload.” Consider using an “attenuator” or removing amplifiers to improve your reception.
- If you decide to replace or upgrade your indoor or outdoor antenna, many types are available from electronics retail stores at a variety of prices. Websites such as www.antennaweb.org provide information on the locations of broadcast towers and the types of outdoor antennas appropriate for the stations you wish to receive. If you need assistance with upgrading your antenna system, check with a local antenna retailer or antenna installer.

For more information about the DTV transition, go to www.dtv.gov or contact the FCC by e-mailing dtvinfo@fcc.gov; calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY; faxing 1-866-418-0232; or writing to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

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For this or any other consumer publication in an accessible format (electronic ASCII text, Braille, large print, or audio) please write or call us at the address or phone number below, or send an e-mail to FCC504@fcc.gov.

This document is for consumer education purposes only and is not intended to affect any proceedings or cases involving this subject matter or related issues.

9/23/08



Federal Communications Commission ■ Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau ■ 445 12th St., SW ■ Washington, DC 20554
1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) ■ TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) ■ Fax: 1-866-418-0232 ■ www.fcc.gov/cgb

FTC Consumer Alert

Federal Trade Commission ■ Bureau of Consumer Protection ■ Division of Consumer & Business Education

Television is Going Digital: Get the Picture

Big changes are coming to your television. But they have nothing to do with summer re-runs or the new fall season. These changes involve the transition to digital broadcasting on February 17, 2009.

For millions of Americans — those whose televisions are already hooked up to cable or satellite or those who have televisions with built-in digital tuners — the transition should be seamless. But if you get your programming on an analog television through a rooftop antenna or “rabbit ears,” you will have to take action to keep your TV sets working after the transition. You can:

- connect your analog TV to a converter box that will get digital reception;
- connect your analog TV to a paid service like cable or satellite; or
- buy a TV with a built-in digital tuner.

Through a program run by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, every household can get two coupons — each worth \$40 — to help defray the cost of the converter boxes. Most of the boxes cost between \$50 and \$70; you can order the coupons online at www.dtv2009.gov or by phone at 1-888-DTV-2009.

Congress ordered the change to all-digital broadcasting to free up channels for police, fire, and emergency personnel. According to the Federal Communications Commission, the agency that oversees the nation’s airwaves, the digital transition offers benefits beyond public safety: it will open the door to new wireless services for consumers, allow TV stations to offer better picture and sound quality, and enable TV stations to broadcast several programs at the same time.

If You’re Considering Using a Coupon to Buy a Converter Box...

Government coupons for converter boxes are available on a “use it or lose it” basis for 90 days after they are mailed to you: if you don’t use your coupons within 90 days, you cannot get replacement coupons. You can apply one coupon toward the purchase of each converter box so you’ll need two coupons only if you need two converter boxes. It’s illegal to sell the coupons, but you can give them to a family member or friend.

All coupon-eligible converter boxes must be able to receive digital signals over the air and convert them to analog signals that your analog television can display. Still, different brands of converters offer different features. For example, one popular feature called “analog pass-through” lets you keep getting analog signals from stations that haven’t yet switched to digital, as well as from some low power stations that will continue to broadcast an analog signal after February 17, 2009. Low power stations serve a very small area or bring in the signal of a larger station that is far away.

With many consumers in the market for converter boxes, subscription services, or digital televisions, the Federal Trade Commission, the nation’s consumer protection agency, has some shopping tips to make sure you continue to get your favorite television programs come February 2009:

1. Never pay for a coupon for a digital converter box. The coupons are free from the federal government.

-
2. Don't give your Social Security number or other sensitive financial information when you order — or redeem — your coupon.
 3. If you return a converter box you bought using a coupon, you can't get the value of the coupon back. Before you buy a converter box, ask the retailer about the box's features, any manufacturer's warranty, and the store's return policy.
 4. Before you leave the store with your new converter box, check to make sure installation instructions are included. If you have questions, ask the retailer to explain the installation — or check to see whether the manufacturer offers a toll-free help line. You can find general installation instructions at www.dtv.gov/publications.html.
 5. Installing a converter box is easy, but if you decide to hire someone to install it, get the price in writing before you agree to the job, and put any personal information you may keep in your home in a safe place.
 6. Ignore any offer for a "free" converter box, especially if it requires you to pay for shipping or a warranty. The companies that are making these offers are not certified by the government, and their converter boxes are not eligible for the coupon program.

If You're Considering Subscribing to Cable, Satellite, or Other Pay TV Service...

If you have an analog TV and you decide to subscribe to cable, satellite, or another type of pay TV service, contact your local providers to see what kinds of services are available in your area. Compare prices and terms, service commitments, and customer satisfaction rates. The transition to digital broadcasting affects free over-the-air television broadcasting, not cable or satellite service you pay for. To keep getting free, over-the-air broadcasts on any analog TV that is not connected to the pay service, you will need a digital converter box.

If You Buy a New Television...

If you decide to buy a new television with a built-in digital tuner (also called a digital receiver), you won't have to order a coupon or buy and install a converter box unless you also want to keep your old analog television on hand. If you currently get good reception on channels 2 - 51, you shouldn't have to get a new antenna for a new digital television. Nor will you need to buy a high definition television (HDTV) to get a digital picture.

Check your owner's manual to see if the televisions you have are analog or digital. If you decide to shop for a new TV, make sure the label and the packaging say that the television has a built-in digital tuner. You might get a great price on an analog television — either from retailers or people in your community who are selling them — but every analog set — including small and battery-powered televisions and televisions in your RV — will need a converter box to get a digital picture, and you will need to order a coupon if you want to take advantage of the government's program.

For More Information

About coupons and converter boxes:

www.dtv2009.gov or call 1-888-DTV-2009 (TTY: 1-877-530-2634).

About the transition to digital television:

www.dtv.gov or call 1-888-CALL-FCC (TTY: 1-888-835-5322).

About consumer protection in general:

ftc.gov or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (TTY: 1-866-653-4261).

This publication was prepared with assistance from the Federal Communications Commission.

June 2008