

Fast Facts about the Digital Transition and TV Converter Box Coupon Program



Why is the Digital Transition Happening?

By June 12, 2009, all full-power television stations will stop broadcasting in analog and switch to 100% digital broadcasting, due to a Congressional mandate. This historic change from analog to digital broadcasting will free up portions of the nation's airwaves, known as spectrum, for use by emergency responders. Digital broadcasting provides a clearer picture and more programming options for consumers. Some television channels will be turned over to police and fire departments for emergency communication, and others will be auctioned to companies to provide new wireless services.

How Do Consumers Identify What They Need to Do to Be Ready for the Digital Switch?

- Consumers who use "rabbit ears" or a rooftop antenna connected to an analog television must take action before June 12, 2009, to continue receiving television broadcasts. Their options include:
 - 1) Buy a converter box, with or without a government coupon, that will plug into their current analog TV, or
 - 2) Buy a TV with a digital tuner, or
 - 3) Connect their analog TV to cable, satellite or other pay service.
- Cable and satellite subscribers should check with their providers before June 12, 2009, to see how they are handling the transition.
- Consumers not sure what to do should take a short quiz to help figure out their options at www.DTVTransition.org.

Basics about NTIA TV Converter Box Coupon Program

- The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), part of the Department of Commerce, is offering all U.S. households up to two \$40 coupons to help pay for the cost of certified TV converter boxes.
- A TV converter box is a one-time purchase, with no monthly service charges, that will allow over-the-air analog TVs to continue to work.
- Certified converter boxes typically cost between \$40 and \$80.
- Coupons are free but will be mailed on a first-come, first-served basis, while supplies last.
- Coupons expire 90 days after they are mailed.
- Coupons will be mailed to consumers by the Federal government.
- Along with the coupon(s), consumers receive instructions for using a coupon, a list of coupon-eligible certified TV converter boxes, a list of retailers where they can use the coupon to buy a certified converter box and FAQs about using the coupon.

How to Request the Coupon

- Consumers may apply for the converter box coupons by:
 - 1) **Online:** www.DTV2009.gov
 - 2) **Phone:** 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009)
 - 3) **Mail:** PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208
 - 4) **Fax:** 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632)
 - 5) **For deaf or hard of hearing callers:** 1-877-530-2634 (English TTY)
1-866-495-1161 (Spanish TTY)



Additional Resources

For more information, please check out these Web sites:

www.DTV2009.gov – NTIA’s Web site for consumers.

www.ntiadtv.gov – NTIA’s Web site for retailers participating in the TV Converter Box Coupon Program.

www.DTVAnswers.com – The National Association of Broadcasters’ Web site on the DTV transition that offers information about television’s analog shut-off, including resources to help choose an antenna, converter box details, videos and more.

www.ceretailers.org - Consumer Electronics Retailers Coalition’s Web site where you can download a special “Consumer Guide” on the DTV transition.

www.dtv.gov – The Federal Communications Commission’s Web site featuring DTV-related consumer resources, outreach tools, publications, news and more.

www.DTVTransition.org – The DTV Transition Coalition Web site where you can take an online quiz to find out if you are ready for the DTV transition or access an extensive list of online DTV resources.

www.digitaltips.org - A valuable resource provided by the Consumer Electronics Association that has a handy “Quick Start Guide” to install a TV Converter Box and other useful tools.