

DTV TALKING POINTS

By law, full-power television stations nationwide are required to transition to all-digital broadcasting by June 12, 2009.

- By June 12, 2009, all full-power TV stations must switch from the old method of transmitting signals known as the analog to an exclusively digital format.
- The DTV transition is the greatest advancement in television technology since the introduction of color.
- The reason why America is switching to digital is because digital is a more efficient way to broadcast, and it will free up the airwaves for other services.
- There are many benefits of digital television, including crystal-clear pictures and sound, and more channels and services than ever before – all for free.
- Consumers who use antennas to watch free over-the-air television—and don't subscribe to a subscription TV service such as cable or—risk losing their reception after the transition, unless they upgrade and take the steps to receive a digital signal.
- Consumers who subscribe to pay TV services, such as cable or satellite, should not be affected by the DTV transition and will not need to upgrade their television sets.
- Consumers who will be disproportionately affected by the DTV transition include people of color, the elderly, people who live in rural areas, people with disabilities and the economically disadvantaged.
- One of the easiest and cheapest ways for consumers to get ready for the switch is to buy a DTV converter box that connects to their TV set.
- A DTV converter box is an electronic device that hooks up to your analog TV set and over-the-air antenna. The box converts the digital television signal into a format that analog televisions can display.
- Consumers do not have to purchase a new TV set for the DTV transition. This is especially important for people on a fixed income to understand.
- Congress has appropriated \$1.5 billion to fund a converter box coupon program. The program is administered by the Commerce Department's

- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). The NTIA is offering households up to two \$40 coupons to help defray the cost of converter boxes.
- Consumers can apply for up to two \$40 coupons to be used toward the purchase of up to two DTV converter boxes.
- Consumers can apply online at DTV2009.gov. People without Internet access can apply by phone at 1-888-DTV-2009 or by mail.
- Coupons are mailed via the U.S. Postal Service, and consumers must redeem them within 90 days.
- A converter box costs between \$40 and \$70, and can be purchased at thousands of stores locally and nationwide, including Wal-mart, Best Buy, and Radio Shack. Consumers can also order boxes online or by telephone. An updated list of retailers is at <https://dtv2009.gov/VendorSearch.aspx>.
- The converter box coupon program plays a critical role in helping vulnerable communities make the switch to DTV. Consumers need to apply now for their coupons to take advantage of this important subsidy.
- Grassroots outreach efforts are critical to educating Americans about the DTV transition. Members of the DTV Transition Coalition are working hard to ensure no one loses television reception due to a lack of information about the DTV transition.