



COMMERCE NEWS

U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Office of the Secretary
www.commerce.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 23, 2008

CONTACT: Richard Mills/Ann Marie Hauser
202-482-4883

300 Days Until Digital TV Transition *Gutierrez Urges Americans to Redeem TV Converter Box Coupons Within Required 90-Day Timeframe*

WASHINGTON—U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez today issued the following statement marking 300 days until the nation makes the switch to digital broadcasting on February 17, 2009.

“Today, the nation is 300 days away from the historic digital television transition for all full-power broadcasters. Already, more than 650,000 households have acted by purchasing a converter box and are now experiencing the benefits of digital television with a clearer picture and more programming choices.

“The first coupons mailed are set to expire at the end of May and I encourage all Americans who have ordered a coupon to purchase your eligible converter box within the 90-day required timeframe.”

Background:

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 requires full-power television stations to cease analog broadcasts and switch to digital after February 17, 2009. The Act also authorizes Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to create the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, which is funded by the \$19 billion airwaves auction and not tax dollars.

The transition will offer consumers a clearer picture, more programming choices and free up the airwaves for better communications among emergency first responders and new telecommunications services.

By February 17, 2009, consumers need to look at each analog television set in their home that is not connected to cable, satellite, or other pay television service and make a decision:

- They may connect it to cable, satellite, or pay television service;
- They may replace it with a TV with a digital tuner, or

- They may keep it working with a TV converter box.

Some viewers watch programs over translators or other low power stations which may continue broadcasting analog signals after February 17, 2009. Those viewers may wish to select a converter box that will pass through analog signals.

Households may request two coupons, which are worth \$40 each and can be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes. Between now, and March 31, 2009, households can request two coupons while funding is available in one of four ways:

- Apply online at www.dtv2009.gov.
- Call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), TTY 1-877-530-2634
- Mail a coupon application to: PO BOX 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000
- Fax a coupon application to 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632)

NTIA will provide consumers a list of eligible converters and participating retailers when coupons are mailed. Coupons expire 90 days after they are mailed, and only one coupon can be used to purchase each coupon-eligible converter box.

NTIA is responsible for the development of the domestic and international telecommunications policy of the Executive Branch.

- # # # -