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**National
Telecommunications &
Information
Administration**

Commerce's NTIA Urges Federal Partners to Help Reach Targeted Communities about the TV Converter Box Coupon Program

More than 2 million applications for more than 3.7 million coupons have been requested since the program opened on January 1, 2008

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WASHINGTON - The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today hosted a meeting with more than 15 other federal agencies to further coordinate efforts to educate the nation about the February 17, 2009, deadline to transition to digital television.

"We are extremely grateful to all our federal partners who have assisted us thus far in educating Americans about the digital television transition," said NTIA Acting Administrator Meredith Baker. "These partners are particularly important in reaching the communities most at risk for losing television broadcasts and we urge them to continue utilizing their communication channels to get the word out about the TV Converter Box Coupon Program."

To date, more than two million applications for more than 3.7 million coupons have been requested since the program opened on January 1, 2008.

During the meeting, NTIA outlined their current and upcoming consumer education efforts. In addition, the agencies discussed strategies and existing communications efforts, which may be leveraged to raise consumer awareness of the digital television transition and the TV Converter Box Coupon Program.

More than 15 federal agencies participated in the meeting including the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging (AoA); U.S. Department of Agriculture; U.S. Department of Homeland Security; F.E.M.A; and the Social Security Administration.

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.

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.

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)

The coupon distribution process begins February 17, 2008, when retailers are expected to accept coupons and have certified converters on shelves. Participating retailers include Best Buy, Circuit City, Kmart, Target, Sam's Club, Sears, RadioShack, Wal-Mart, and more than 250 others representing more than 15,000 stores throughout the nation.

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 encourages the voluntary participation of consumer electronics retailers. The application deadline to become a certified retailer is March 31, 2008. Consumer electronics retailers interested in participating in the program should go to www.ntiadv.gov or call 1-866-296-1107 for additional information and to sign up as a participating retailer.

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

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