

What You Need to Know About the Switch to Digital TV



ARE YOU READY FOR JUNE 12, 2009?

TV is changing and it may require action on your part or you won't get any TV signal at all.

Staff at the Elderly Commission can assist you with:

- Assessing your need for a digital converter box
- Applying for a converter box coupon
- Obtaining a converter box
- Installing the converter box in your home

Don't wait until your TV goes blank, please call the Elderly Commission at 617-635-4366.

Let us help you make the switch to digital TV today!

What is the Digital Broadcast Transition?

On June 12, 2009 all full- power television stations in the United States will stop broadcasting in analog and switch to 100% digital broadcasting. Digital broadcasting promises to provide a clearer picture and more programming options and will free up airwaves for use by emergency responders.

Who is Affected?

If you have one or more analog-only TV's that don't have cable or satellite service connected to them and are using a "rabbit ear" antenna to receive your local-over-the-air broadcasts, you will be affected by this transition, and will need to take action to continue receiving any local over-the-air broadcasts after June 12, 2009.

If you are Affected by the Digital Broadcast Transition, you have 3 Options.

Option 1: Buy a box that converts digital signals to analog signals that your analog set can display.

Estimated Cost: \$50-\$70 if you buy a basic converter box (\$10-\$30 with coupon)

You can apply for a converter box coupon until July 31, 2009. Coupons expire 90 days after they are mailed.

Option 2: Buy a new television set with a built in ATSC digital tuner.

Estimated Cost: \$100 and up. (High Definition is not required)

Option 3: Subscribe to cable or satellite service.

Estimated Cost: At least \$8-\$20/month (\$96-\$240/year) plus possible equipment rental fees.

Note: Even with a converter box or digital television set, a TV may not work if you have an inadequate antenna. TV stations broadcasting in digital use both the VHF band (channels 2-13) and the 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. A converter box or digital TV will not work if connected to just "rabbit ears." You will have to purchase an Indoor UHF/VHF antenna, which costs between \$10-20 and can be found at converter box and television retailers.

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