



Montana Public Service Commission
1701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 202601
Helena MT 59620-2601

March 18, 2008

For more information, contact:
Chairman Greg Jergeson – 406-444-6166
Phil Cooke – 406-444-6190

Montana Consumers Should Be Aware of February 2009 Digital TV Transition

The Montana Public Service Commission wants to get the word out in Montana that, beginning February 17, 2009, television stations across the country will switch from analog to digital-only broadcast television (DTV). Currently, U.S. television stations are broadcasting in both analog and digital.

For viewers who have televisions that receive free over-the-air programming with a roof-top antenna or “rabbit ears” on the TV, the type of TV you own is very important. A digital television, which is a TV with an internal digital tuner, will allow you to continue to watch free over-the-air programming after February 17, 2009. However, if you have an analog TV you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to continue to watch broadcast television on that set. The antenna you use to receive analog broadcasts should work for receiving digital broadcasts, both on a DTV and on an analog TV connected to a digital-to-analog converter box.

Cable and satellite TV subscribers with analog TVs hooked up to their cable or satellite service should not be affected by the DTV transition. However, consumers are advised to check with their provider to find out if they need any additional equipment for their service.

To help consumers with the DTV transition, Congress has established the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a part of the Department of Commerce administers this program. Every U.S. household is eligible to receive up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, toward the purchase of eligible digital-to-analog converter boxes. The NTIA’s website, www.dtv2009.gov, provides more information, or you may contact the NTIA office at 1-888-388-2009.

###