



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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THURSDAY “SOFT TEST” IS WAKE-UP CALL FOR DTV READINESS

Analog Programming to be Interrupted with Reminders to Prepare for DTV Transition

How ready is Dallas-Fort Worth for the Digital Transition? What consumer resources are available?

WASHINGTON, DC – With only three weeks left until the nationwide digital television (DTV) transition on June 12, many local broadcasters will be participating in coordinated DTV “soft tests” Thursday. These tests are designed to alert analog viewers who are unprepared for the impending transition that they will lose service once the transition occurs unless they act promptly to get ready.

A “soft test” simulates to some extent what unprepared viewers will experience when the DTV transition occurs. Instead of completely cutting off the analog signal, during the soft test broadcasters will interrupt the regular programming of viewers receiving analog signals to warn them the interruption indicates they are not prepared for the transition. Such viewers – other than those connected to a subscription TV service such as cable or satellite (which in some cases still utilize a broadcaster’s analog signal) – must take immediate action to avoid a complete loss of service on June 12. Digital broadcasts are available now and will not be interrupted by the soft tests. The length of the interruptions will vary by station but generally will run between 2 and 5 minutes.

Nationwide, Nielsen estimates that about 3.3 million households – 2.9 percent of U.S. households with TVs – remained unready for the transition as of May 10. The Federal Communications Commission and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration have together identified Dallas-Fort Worth as one of the DTV transition “hotspot” markets, where a variety of factors indicate a significant number of households are currently unprepared for the transition. In the few weeks remaining before the transition, the FCC is gearing up its ongoing consumer assistance efforts in Dallas-Fort Worth and other markets to ensure consumers are prepared for the end of analog broadcast service for full-power television stations.

These are the latest specifics for the Dallas-Fort Worth market that reporters and editors will find helpful in their coverage:

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| How many people in your community are not ready for DTV? | Nielsen estimates that as of May 10, 6.67% of households in Dallas-Fort Worth were not ready for the DTV transition. |
| What local TV stations are participating in the DTV “soft test” on May 21 and when is the test? | For the latest information on station participation, visit http://www.dtv.gov/media_toolkit.html |
| How many local households rely on over-the-air TV signals? | In Dallas-Fort Worth, Nielsen estimates that about 492,380 households (or 19.8% of that media market) rely entirely on over-the-air broadcasts. |
| What events are happening in your community to help people get ready for DTV? | Please check www.dtv.gov for updates to local event information as it becomes available. |
| Is it too late for consumers to get coupons for the converter boxes? | Consumers still have until July 31 to get coupons by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC. In Dallas-Fort Worth, we know that 1,679,961 people have ordered coupons for their converter boxes, and only 903,747 have been redeemed as of May 6. It’s important that consumers in your market understand that the coupons expire and they should act quickly. |
| Is it possible to get free local in-home installation for the converter box? | <p>R & D Training & Technical & Service, Inc. is providing assistance in Dallas, for more information please call 1-866-202-4596</p> <p>Installs Inc., LLC. is providing assistance in Dallas-Fort Worth, for more information please call 1-800-582-4250</p> <p>These organizations are providing assistance in Texas:</p> <p>KMAD Business Services, Inc Contact: 1-866-932-2768 Hours of Operation: Mon-Thu: 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Fri: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Sat: 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Sun: 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Hernandez Consulting LLC Contact: 1-800-310-8515</p> |
| Where can consumers call for help with the DTV transition? | 1-888-CALL-FCC |

“The soft test is a wake-up call to consumers telling them that the time to get ready for the DTV transition is now,” said Acting FCC Chairman Michael Copps. “We don’t want anyone to be left without the news, information and entertainment they need and enjoy. If you’re having trouble getting ready, you can get help right in your community and even in your own home by calling 1-888-CALL-FCC.”

Because the news media play a crucial role in reaching consumers who have yet to prepare for the transition, the FCC has provided a DTV Media Toolkit (http://www.dtv.gov/media_toolkit.html) containing information about the transition, including local statistics and reception information, answers to frequently asked questions, media contacts and other important resources. Information about DTV transition assistance in your local area will be updated regularly on www.dtv.gov and include details about walk-in centers, events where consumers can get technical help and free in-home installation.

On June 12, all full-power television stations in the United States will stop analog broadcast service and transmit only digital signals. Consumers who do not subscribe to pay television services and have older, analog televisions will need to attach digital-to-analog converter boxes to their televisions in order to continue receiving over-the-air television programming.

The switch to digital will reward most viewers with better sound, a better picture, more channels and more programs. The transition will also help save lives by clearing airwaves for better first-responder radio service. And it makes room for the future by clearing airwaves for advanced mobile Internet services.

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More information about the DTV transition can be found
at www.dtv.gov