



NEWS

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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC EXPANDS NATIONAL DIGITAL TELEVISION EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN, TARGETS OUTREACH IN WILMINGTON, NC

Commission Dedicates Team of Experts to Wilmington, NC to Assist Public and Launches Regional -- First in Flight, First in Digital -- Campaign that includes New Public Service Announcements, Billboards and Educational Materials in Partnership with Communities

Washington, DC – In a concerted effort to ensure that Americans have the information they need to make a smooth transition to digital television, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Kevin J. Martin today announced that the Commission has expanded its national Digital Television (DTV) Education and Awareness Campaign to include the release of newly developed public service announcements (PSAs) that will be distributed nationally to full-power television and radio stations.

More specifically, the FCC is providing more than 11,000 radio stations across the country with public service announcements on the transition. The 15, 30 and 60-second radio PSAs highlight important information for consumers to adequately prepare for the transition. High quality audio and MP3 versions of the PSAs are available for listening and downloading at http://www.dtv.gov/video_audio.html.

Chairman Martin also announced billboards are slated to be placed in approximately 45 of the nation's television markets announcing the completion of the switch from analog to digital television on February 17, 2009. Billboards have already gone up in Philadelphia, Tampa, San Francisco and Seattle. The billboards are expected to be placed on highway signs, buses and subways in the nation's largest metropolitan areas.

As part of the overall campaign, the Commission has dedicated a team of experts to assist the five-county Wilmington, NC area with the digital switch set for 12:00 noon on September 8, 2008. This will include the release of specialized, First in Flight, First in Digital, PSAs and billboards, as well as educational materials, to assist the Wilmington television market with the transition.

The Wilmington television market will be the first market in the nation to make the DTV transition. Beginning on September 8th Wilmington-area stations WWAY (ABC), WSFX-TV (FOX), WECT (NBC), WILM-LP (CBS) and W51CW (Trinity Broadcasting) will broadcast

only digital signals to their viewers in the Wilmington, North Carolina Designated Market Area (DMA), which includes New Hanover, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus and Pender counties.

The Commission continues to coordinate and partner with Congress, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), local officials, community groups, broadcasters, cable and satellite companies, manufacturers and retailers to accelerate and broaden consumer education outreach efforts throughout the nation.

In addition to the new PSAs, billboards and educational materials, the FCC's national DTV Education and Awareness Campaign includes:

- Outreach specifically tailored to reach consumers who receive their television signals "over-the-air" via antennas; as well as those who are hard to reach and may be unaware of the upcoming transition, including senior citizens; non-English speaking and minority communities; people with disabilities; low-income individuals; and people living in rural and tribal areas.
- The creation of advisories, fact sheets and other publications to inform consumers about a variety of important DTV issues that may impact them.
- Participation in media events, conferences, town hall meetings, workshops, and other public events.
- Grassroots community outreach in senior centers, libraries, retail stores and other public venues.
- Coordination with a broad range of Federal, State, and Local entities and Community stakeholders, including, for example, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs, state DMVs and health departments, sports leagues, and the National Association of Broadcasters.

The DTV transition should not affect TV sets that are connected to a cable or satellite service. However, viewers who watch free, over-the-air television and receive signals with the help of rooftop antennas or rabbit ears will require converter boxes to receive digital signals on their existing analog sets. The FCC is encouraging these Wilmington-area viewers to immediately order their coupons for analog-to-digital converter boxes.

The converter box program is run by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Each household can receive two free coupons good towards the purchase of two converter boxes. The coupons take a minimum of two weeks to be processed and mailed. For more information on the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program, visit www.dtv2009.gov, or call 1-888-388-2009 (voice) or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY).

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