

## U. S. television switches from analog broadcast to all-digital broadcasting in February, 2009.

The analog shut-off primarily affects TV sets that rely on "over-the-air" television broadcasts.\*

If you have a television set in your home that works with the help of "rabbit ears" or a roof-top antenna, you receive your TV signal over-the-air.

Idaho Public Television currently broadcasts digitally and because of this new broadcast technology, offers several free over-the-air digital channels statewide.

To begin to enjoy the improved picture and sound of digital TV, you have three options:

- Purchase a converter box that converts the broadcast digital signal to an analog signal that your TV can receive.
- Buy a new TV with a built-in digital receiver.
- Subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay-TV service.

IdahoPTV provides information and answers to your questions to help you make your switch to digital TV simple. For more information and links to more resources, go to our Web site at [idahoptv.org/dtv](http://idahoptv.org/dtv).

\* Households that receive TV from a rural translator will probably not be affected by the February, 2009 shut-off.

### IdahoPTV's Digital service\*

- **IDAHO — Sub-channel 1**  
24-hour standard definition primary programming that mirrors the traditional analog service.
- **KIDS — Sub-channel 2**  
Standard definition children's programming available daily from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- **LEARN/CREATE — Sub-channel 3**  
Standard definition enrichment programming for life-long learners available daily from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- **WORLD — Sub-channel 4**  
Standard definition public affairs and life & culture programming available daily from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- **HIGH-DEFINITION — Sub-channel 5**  
High definition programming available daily from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m.

\* The digital service changes in early summer, 2008 to provide four 24-hour digital channels, including one high-definition channel.

### Key things to know

- Your current IdahoPTV analog reception will continue without interruption through February 17, 2009.
- Converter boxes are available now; rebate coupons are available by calling **1.888.DTV.2009** or going to **mydtv2009.gov**

### To find out more, visit the following websites:

IdahoPTV's digital information site  
[www.idahoptv.org/dtv](http://www.idahoptv.org/dtv)

Federal Communications Commission digital site  
[www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov) and [mydtv2009.gov](http://mydtv2009.gov)

National Association of Broadcasters digital site  
[www.dtvanswers.com](http://www.dtvanswers.com)



## Digital TV is here.

Find out how to get a better picture, improved sound and more programs on IdahoPTV.



## What is the switch to digital television?

Analog technology has been used to transmit TV signals since the medium was invented. Legislation passed by Congress requires that all full-power TV stations in the U.S. convert their broadcast signals from analog to digital by February 17, 2009. Low-power stations and stations served by translators are not affected at this time. Idaho Public Television already broadcasts a digital signal.

## How will this affect me?

- If you have an older analog-only TV and use an antenna or rabbit ears to receive over-the-air (OTA) signals, you need to make a change to continue watching television after February 17, 2009.
- If you already have a TV with a digital tuner, or have cable or satellite service, or you live in an area served by a rural translator, your television reception should continue uninterrupted.

## How do I tell if my TV set is analog or digital?

If your TV is more than one year old, most likely it is not digital. If you're in doubt, check your owner's manual to see if it mentions a digital tuner, or look on the set for an indication of an ATSC (Advanced Television Systems Committee) tuner. If it has one, your set can process a digital signal, and you've already made the digital switch. You can also check the manufacturer's Web site for full details about your particular model. If there's no mention of digital or ATSC, then you have an analog set, and you have a switch to make.

## What should I do?

For many IdahoPTV viewers, there is a simple and inexpensive solution to make the switch. A one-time purchase of a set-top converter box allows your analog TV to properly display an incoming OTA digital broadcast. After a simple initial setup, your viewing continues just as before, except you have several IdahoPTV channels instead of one. Eligible converter boxes are expected to cost between \$50 and \$70. The government now offers \$40 rebate coupons to all households bringing the actual cost to \$30 or less. These coupons can only be used toward the purchase of eligible converter



boxes. The number of rebates will be limited, so apply as soon as possible. You may also consider subscribing to cable or satellite service.

## Do I have to buy a new TV?

No. If you buy a set-top converter box to work with your analog TV, there's no need to buy a new TV unless you choose to. To request a coupon, you can apply online at [mydtv2009.gov](http://mydtv2009.gov) or call the 24-hour hotline at **1-888-DTV-2009** (1-888-388-2009).

## What if I decide to buy a new TV?

If you want to upgrade to a new TV set, you need to choose between simple digital TV (standard-definition) or high-definition TV (with a superior picture). Although prices are coming down, high-definition TVs will always be more expensive than simple digital sets. As long as you buy a digital TV with an ATSC digital tuner, you can make the switch properly.

## Is IdahoPTV changing its broadcasts?

In addition to broadcasting the traditional analog channel, IdahoPTV has been broadcasting digital channels since 2001, including IdahoPTV HDTV, Kids, Create/Learn and World Channels. During the summer of 2008, we plan to change to four 24-hour, seven days per week digital channels, offering our audience expanded program options, viewing times and 24-hour HDTV. You'll have four continuous IdahoPTV choices every time you turn on your digitally-equipped TV!

## Why is this switch necessary? Is digital really better?

There are many advantages to an all-digital broadcast system. Digital television (DTV) allows multiple programs to be broadcast simultaneously within the same bandwidth previously used for a single analog program. (Imagine a congested two-lane road that overnight could carry four times the traffic, uncongested!) This means IdahoPTV offers more channels, programs, schedule choices and variety to all our viewers. Digital picture quality, sound and reception are usually superior; signals are less prone to interference and reception problems; and the picture is free of snow and "ghost" images. DTV enables stations to transmit additional data services, including significantly improved closed captioning. With digital

broadcasting, a portion of the frequency once used for analog broadcast, become available for use by public agencies and emergency first responders.

## What's the difference between high-definition TV and digital TV?

High-definition television (HDTV) displays the highest quality digital broadcast TV picture available. While a standard digital picture consists of 480 horizontal lines on the screen, full HD uses 1,080 lines to compose a much more precisely tuned and beautifully detailed TV picture. (Think of the difference between newspaper photos and those in a glossy magazine.) An HD signal can include Dolby digital surround sound, which offers a superior sound experience as well. The 2009 switch is merely from analog to digital, however. Going all the way to HD is entirely optional.

## Will my current cable or digital service continue to work?

You should be able to continue watching your existing TV with your current cable or satellite service, though some services may require the addition of, or a change in, your set-top box. Cable and satellite systems may not provide all IdahoPTV digital channels, including HD; check with your service provider to find out their plans and the details.

## Will my antenna work with digital signals?

If your antenna provides a good incoming VHF and UHF signal now, it should continue to work with a digital signal. You still need to add a converter box or get a digital TV. If you want to continue to receive broadcasts from local translators and low-power stations, make sure you select a converter box that allows the analog signal to pass through so you can still receive those stations.

## Will my existing VCR, DVD player or camcorder continue to work?

They should continue to function properly in analog with your converter, and in standard-definition digital, but if you're recording from high-definition digital, the resulting copy will only be in standard definition. If you now use a VCR to receive your signal, you will probably still need to use a set-top converter box, although more recent VCR and DVD recorders have digital tuners. To be sure, check the manual for your device, or contact the manufacturer or the place of purchase.