

Technology In Our Lives

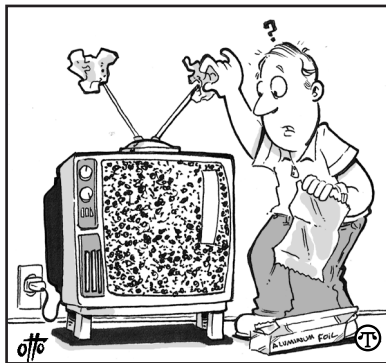
Digital TV Transition: What You Need To Know

(NAPSA)—While many people hold on to “rabbits’ feet” for luck, those who use “rabbit ears” to improve television reception may find that their good fortune is about to run out.

On February 17, 2009, most U.S. television stations will be switching to “all-digital” broadcasting—which will pretty much render rabbit ears obsolete. Even with a better antenna, or an outdoor antenna, you may not get the new digital signals.

Those new signals deliver a clean, sharp picture, but only when it’s strong enough. With present broadcast technology, a weaker signal just means a fuzzy or snowy picture. After the digital TV transition, if you get a strong signal, the picture will be great—but if you get a weaker signal and rely on over-the-air reception, you may not get any picture at all. That’s how digital works; it’s either there or it’s not. There’s no in-between.

In order to get digital signals to work on older TVs not hooked up to cable or satellite, you’ll need a special tuner box. The tuners can be purchased for \$50 to \$60 and, if you’re eligible, you can even get a government coupon to cover up to \$40 of the cost. Call (888) 388-2009 or go to www.dtv2009.gov for full details and to get up to two coupons.



After the digital TV transition, adding tinfoil to your antenna likely won't be enough to improve reception.

But even with the new “digital to analog” converter box, you still need to get a good, strong television signal. Adding tinfoil to your old antenna simply may not be enough. The smart thing to do is test your reception with a digital tuner now. Most television stations are already transmitting both digital and analog (traditional) signals. If it works, great; if not, consider talking to your local cable company, which already delivers all local digital signals, or have an outdoor antenna installed. More information on the DTV transition and cable services is available on www.thisiscable.com.