

# Technology In Our Lives

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## Making The Digital TV Switch Easier ㊦

(NAPSA)—On June 12, 2009, the television most people grew up with will fade to black. As analog TV broadcasts switch to digital format, millions of older Americans may find themselves left in the dark.

Older people are more likely to receive their broadcasts free via an antenna or rabbit ears, and they are more likely to own analog television sets. Forty percent of the approximately 20 million analog-only households include individuals who are 50 and older—an audience that watches almost 5.5 hours of TV each day. And for many of them, television is their main connection to the outside world—their link to news and to vital weather and safety information.

Many people are still confused about what the switchover means for them. A good place to find information is the DTV Call Center, (877) 698-8068, where consumers can get help with their questions about the conversion. The Call Center is available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. EST.

After the transition occurs in their market, individuals with television sets that rely on an antenna or rabbit ears need to do one of three things to keep getting a signal:

1. Buy and install a \$40 to \$70 converter box on the old analog set;
2. Connect the old set to a cable or satellite system; or
3. Purchase a new television with a built-in DTV (digital television) tuner.

To help reduce the cost, the federal government is offering up to two \$40 coupons per household toward the purchase of two digital-to-analog converter boxes. There may be a waiting list for coupons, but more are becoming available.

### Debunking the myths

Contrary to some reports, Americans do not have to subscribe to cable or satellite to continue to watch television after the conversion. Traditional analog television sets will still work with a converter box; it's not necessary to buy a high-definition set. And if individuals decide to hang on to their rabbit ears, the government will help pay for a converter.

People can help by lending a hand to their relatives and neighbors (particularly if they are older). Talk to family and friends to make sure they are aware the transition is coming and that they can get information or request coupons by calling the DTV Call Center.