

Are You Ready?

Less than three months remain for television viewers to make sure their televisions will work after Feb. 17, 2009.

If you use an antenna to watch TV on a set that has an analog tuner – and don't subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay TV service – you will need to upgrade to digital television by Feb. 17, 2009.

At least 19.6 million households receive over-the-air signals exclusively in their homes and 14.9 million households have secondary over-the-air TV sets in their bedrooms or kitchens. Overall, nearly 70 million television sets are at risk of losing their signals.

Consumers have three options to continue getting television reception:

- Purchase a DTV converter box for your existing TV set
- Purchase a TV set with a built-in digital tuner
- Subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay TV service, if that carrier offers the local broadcast stations you want.

Note that the transition only applies to full-power TV stations. Some low-power stations will remain in analog, so you may need specific equipment to watch analog and digital broadcasting after the transition. "Pass-through" converter boxes allow your TV set to receive both analog and digital signals.

A DTV converter box is an easy-to-install electronic device that hooks up to your analog television set and over-the-air antenna. The box converts the digital television signal into an analog format, making it viewable on your analog TV set. The U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) is issuing each household up to two \$40 coupons to help defray the cost of converter boxes.

DTV technology is more flexible and efficient than the current analog system. The switch to digital broadcasting will allow television stations to offer crystal-clear pictures and sound, plus more channels and programming – all for free. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 requires full-power television stations to turn off their analog channels by Feb. 17, 2009, and begin broadcasting exclusively in a digital format.

Each TV set or TV recording device, such as a VCR, that does not have a digital tuner must be connected to a DTV converter box to continue receiving broadcast signals.

Between Jan. 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, consumers can apply for up to two \$40 coupons per household by calling 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), by applying online at www.DTV2009.gov or by mailing an application to P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000. Applicants will receive their coupons in the mail.

Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

The holiday shopping season is a time when busy people can become careless and vulnerable to theft and other holiday crime. The following tips can help you be more careful, prepared and aware during the holiday season.

- Shop during daylight hours whenever possible. If you must shop at night, go with a friend or family member.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry.
- Do not carry a purse or wallet, if possible.
- Always carry your driver license or identification card along with necessary cash, checks and/or a credit card you expect to use.
- Even though you are rushed and thinking about a thousand things, stay alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Pay for purchases with a check or credit card when possible.
- Keep cash in your front pocket.
- Notify the credit card issuer immediately if your credit card is lost, stolen or misused.
- Keep a record of all of your credit card numbers in a safe place at home.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- Beware of strangers approaching you for any reason. At this time of year, "con-artists" may try various methods of distracting you with the intention of taking your money or belongings.

Source: LAPD Crime Prevention Section

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Don't fly your kite near high line wires."



Keegan Brumbaugh, 6 years old
 Keegan is the son of Eugene and Tina Brumbaugh, Gregory, S.D. They are members of Rosebud Electric Cooperative, Gregory, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents.

Holiday Treats



Popcorn Cake

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup salad oil
- 1 lb. marshmallows
- 1 cup dry-roasted peanuts
- 2 cups M&Ms, gumdrops or gummy bears
- 4 quarts popped popcorn

Melt butter, oil and marshmallows in microwave. Pour over candy and corn; stir well. Press into a greased angel food cake pan.

Pam Hofer, Carpenter
Cooperative Connections

Caramel Crispy Treats

- 1/2 cup plus 10 T. butter divided
- 8 cups miniature marshmallows, divided
- 8 cups Crispix cereal, divided
- 1 (14 oz.) pkg. caramels
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk

In a large saucepan, melt 1/4 cup butter and 4 cups marshmallows. Stir in 4 cups cereal. Pat into a greased 9x13-inch pan, set aside. Melt caramels and 10 T. butter in another saucepan, cook and stir over low heat until melted. Stir in milk until smooth. Cool for 10 minutes. Pour over cereal layer. Refrigerate for about 30 minutes or until firm. In a large saucepan, melt the remaining butter and marshmallows. Stir in remaining cereal. Spread over caramel layer. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes or until firm. Store in refrigerator.

Harlo Vetter, Tripp
Cooperative Connections

Raisin Cashew Drops

- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 T. light corn syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 cups coarsely chopped cashews
- 2 cups raisins

In a heavy saucepan over low heat, melt chocolate chips with milk and corn syrup for 10 to 12 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla until blended. Stir in cashews and raisins. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Refrigerate 3 hours or until firm. Store in refrigerator.

Sue Hove, Beresford
Cooperative Connections

Cherry Mocha Charlotte

- 2 (3 oz. each) pkgs. lady fingers
- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1/4 cup cool water
- 1 (5 oz.) package cook-and-serve chocolate pudding
- 2-1/2 cups milk
- 2 T. strong coffee
- 1 cup heavy whipped cream
- 1 (21 oz.) can cherry fruit filling, divided

Line sides and bottom of an 8-inch springform pan with lady fingers. Combine gelatin and water; set aside. In medium saucepan, combine chocolate pudding and milk. Stir constantly over medium heat until pudding comes to a full boil; remove from heat. Stir in gelatin and coffee; cool. In large mixing bowl, whip cream. Fold in cooled pudding and 1 cup cherry fruit filling. Spoon into springform pan and freeze 3 hours. Remove sides of pan and top with remainder of cherry fruit filling. Note: Garnish with chocolate curls if desired.

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Cheese Fudge

- 1/2 lb. Velveeta cheese
- 1/2 lb. butter
- 6 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup cocoa
- Chopped nuts, if desired

Melt cheese and butter in microwave. Sift together and add sugar, cocoa and nuts. Mix together in a large bowl. Place mixture into a buttered cake pan.

Mary Swenson, Brandon
Cooperative Connections

Rocky Road Squares

- 12 oz. chocolate chips
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 T. butter
- 2 cups dry-roasted peanuts
- 10.5 oz. miniature marshmallows

Melt chips with milk and butter over boiling water. Combine nuts and marshmallows in a large bowl; fold in chocolate mixture. Spread in waxed paper-lined 9x13-inch pan. Chill 2 hours. Remove from pan, peel off waxed paper and cut into 40 squares. Cover and store in refrigerator.

Shirley Thedorff, Centerville
Cooperative Connections

Please send your favorite Bread and Breakfast and Seafood recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in December 2008. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.