

# Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



STATE OF ARIZONA  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW  
1275 W. WASHINGTON STREET  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2926  
[WWW.AZAG.GOV](http://WWW.AZAG.GOV)

ANNE TITUS HILBY  
PRESS SECRETARY  
PHONE: (602) 542-8019  
CELL PHONE: (602) 725-2200  
[ANNE.HILBY@AZAG.GOV](mailto:ANNE.HILBY@AZAG.GOV)

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## Terry Goddard Urges Families to Act Now to Prepare for Digital TV

(Phoenix, Ariz. - Dec. 31, 2008) Attorney General Terry Goddard is urging consumers who need to obtain converter boxes to act quickly to prepare for the digital television transition on February 17, 2009.

Demand for federal coupons offsetting the cost of digital converter boxes – devices that enable traditional analog television sets to receive the new digital signal – has increased sharply in recent weeks. Consumers who still need to order their coupons and purchase converter boxes should do so as soon as possible to avoid being inconvenienced by delays that may be caused by the growing demand.

“I do not anticipate that Arizona consumers will have trouble ordering their coupons or purchasing converter boxes, but they need to act now,” Goddard said. “The switch to digital TV is a significant change for our community. I want to make sure that households that need the new boxes don’t find themselves without television or the victim of a scam.”

In November, Goddard and Art Brooks, President of the Arizona Broadcasters Association, offered the following tips on preparing for the digital television transition:

### Are you ready for DTV?

If you subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay television service, you are already prepared for the digital transition. You do not need to take any additional steps to receive your television signal on February 17.

Consumers who receive free, over-the-air broadcasting signals through a set-top or roof-top antenna can still use an over-the-air antenna to receive their signal. If you recently purchased your television, check to see whether it is a “digital ready” television set. If so, then you, too, are prepared and do not need to take any additional steps.

If you receive your signal through an antenna and do not have a digital ready television set, you need to make of the following modifications before February 17:

1. Purchase a DTV converter box at your local electronic retailer. The federal government is offering two \$40 coupons per household towards the purchase of the converter boxes.

Details about the coupon program are available on the National Association of Broadcasters' DTV Web site, [www.dtvanswers.com](http://www.dtvanswers.com), or by calling, toll free, 1-888-DTV-2009. Please note that the federal government will not re-issue lost or expired coupons.

2. Purchase a "digital ready" television set – a television set with a built-in digital tuner.
3. Subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay TV service. To see if all desired local broadcast stations are carried by that service, check with your local service provider.

### **Avoiding Frauds and Scams**

Consumers should be alert to unscrupulous businesses and scam artists trying to take advantage of people confused by the transition. The Attorney General's Office recommends consumers take the following steps to protect themselves:

- Purchase converter boxes from a reputable electronics retailer. Be wary of vendors selling expensive converter equipment or installation packages. Most converter boxes retail for between \$40 and \$70 and contain instructions for self-installation.
- Do not obtain converter box coupons second hand or purchase them from someone trying to sell unused coupons. The only way to be certain you are receiving a legitimate coupon is to obtain it from the federal government. This can be done at [www.DTV2009.com](http://www.DTV2009.com) or by calling, toll-free, 1-888-DTV-2009.
- Setting up a converter box should be simple and quick for most consumers. If you do wish have assistance, be careful when inviting someone to do work in your home. Always compare the fees of several service providers, check references and agree on a price *in writing* before having any work done in your home.
- The DTV transition affects television only. It does not affect how you receive radio broadcasts or access the Internet.
- Understand the transition and the choices available to you. The federal government provides a great deal of information on the DTV transition at [www.dtvanswers.com](http://www.dtvanswers.com).

The Attorney General's Office Web site, [www.azag.gov](http://www.azag.gov), offers links to numerous DTV resources as well as tips to avoid frauds and scams that could arise during the DTV transition. Any consumers who feel they have been victims of a fraud or scam should file a complaint on the Attorney General's Web site or call (602) 542-5763.

For more information, please contact Anne Hilby at (602) 542-8019.

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