



OPASTCO 411

VITAL INFORMATION FOR OPASTCO MEMBERS ABOUT
THEIR INDUSTRY AND THEIR ORGANIZATION

OPASTCO

ORGANIZATION FOR THE PROMOTION
AND ADVANCEMENT OF SMALL
TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES

OPASTCO 411 NEWS FLASH — March 31, 2008

FCC DTV Transition Education Bill Insert Mandates Go Into Effect on April 30

The FCC recently announced that digital television (DTV) transition education bill insert mandates for the telecom industry will go into effect on April 30, 2008, and run through the end of March 2009 (411, March 18). The Order instructs all carriers that receive federal Universal Service Fund support to send materials to their Lifeline and Link-Up program customers. All multichannel video programming distribution (MVPD) service providers are also required to provide the materials to all of their customers.

Lifeline/Link-Up: Carriers must add monthly DTV educational bill stuffers to bills they send to Lifeline and Link-Up customers, or include educational materials about the DTV transition on the bills themselves. The language featured must explain that on Feb. 17, 2009, full-power analog broadcasting will end, and analog-only televisions may be unable to display full-power broadcast programming unless the viewer takes action. It must also state that viewers can get more information about the transition by going to <http://www.dtv.gov>, and that more information about the federal government's converter box subsidy program is available at <http://www.dtv2009.gov> or by calling the National Telecommunications Information Administration at 888/DTV-2009. The Order also gives carriers the option of providing contact information for the DTV Transition Coalition, <http://www.dtvtransition.org>, if they wish to do so. Lifeline/Link-Up customers who do not receive paper bills or notices of billing must be provided with equivalent educational materials along with information that they receive about their monthly bills. All eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) are also required to provide the information as part of their Lifeline/Link-Up marketing and publicity campaigns.

MVPDs: Service providers must add monthly DTV educational bill stuffers to bills they send to their MVPD customers or include educational materials on the bills themselves. The language featured must explain that on Feb. 17, 2009, full-power analog broadcasting will end, and analog-only televisions may be unable to display full-power broadcast programming unless the viewer takes action. It must also explain that viewers can obtain more information about the transition by going to <http://www.dtv.gov> or by calling their MVPD service provider at a number provided, and that more information about the federal government's converter box subsidy program is available at <http://www.dtv2009.gov> or by calling the National Telecommunications Information Administration at 888/DTV-2009. The language must explain any effect that the transition will have on the customer's access to MVPD services and that television sets not connected to the service may need converter boxes or to be replaced. The Order also gives carriers the option of providing contact information for the DTV Transition Coalition, <http://www.dtvtransition.org>, if they wish to do so.

700 MHz: The Order also announced a new rule stating that holders of certain wireless communications systems (WCS) licenses will be required to file a quarterly report to the Commission detailing what efforts, if any, the license holder has undertaken to educate consumers regarding the DTV transition. This rule applies to WCS license authorizations in Block A in the 698-704 MHz and 728-734 MHz bands, Block B in the 704-710 MHz and 734-740 MHz bands, Block E in the 722-728 MHz band, Block C, C1, or C2 in the 746-757 MHz and 776-787 MHz bands, and Block D in the 758-763 MHz and 788-793 MHz bands.

To view the FCC's Order, visit http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-08-56A1.pdf.