

## Electronics Recyclers Gear Up for Digital Broadcasting

**WASHINGTON, DC**, January 29, 2009 (ENS) - In two weeks, Best Buy Co., Inc. will bring its electronics recycling program to all of the company's 1,006 stores across the United States, the company announced Wednesday.

Starting February 15, consumers can bring up to two units per day, per household, for recycling at any U.S. Best Buy store, except those in Puerto Rico, which will join the program next year.

Best Buy will accept most consumer electronics, including televisions and monitors up to 32 inches, desktop computers and notebooks, small electronics, VCR and DVD players, and phones, as well as accessories such as keyboards, mice, and remotes. Televisions or monitor screens greater than 32 inches and console TVs cannot be accepted through the Best Buy recycling program.

A \$10 recycling fee per unit will be charged for items with screens, but consumers will receive a \$10 Best Buy gift card in exchange for the fee.

The Best Buy program will start just two days before the government-mandated switch from analog to digital television broadcasting takes effect on February 17.

Digital broadcasting will allow stations to offer improved picture and sound quality and additional channels but it could make millions of TVs obsolete.

Viewers will be left without a television signal unless they purchase digital television sets, connect to cable, satellite, and alternate delivery systems or purchase a digital-to-analog converter box.

More than 6.5 million U.S. households, or 5.7 percent of all homes, are not ready for the upcoming transition to all-digital broadcasting and would be unable to receive any television programming at all if the transition occurred today, the Nielsen Company reports. This is an improvement of more than 1.3 million homes since Nielsen reported readiness status at the end of December.

Among the 56 local markets that Nielsen measures with electronic meters, the one that is least ready is Albuquerque-Santa Fe, New Mexico, with 12.4 percent of the households completely unready. The most prepared market is Hartford and New Haven, Connecticut, with only 1.8 percent of homes unready.

On Wednesday, the House of Representatives defeated a bill to postpone the transition from analog to digital television broadcasting by four months.

House Republicans were able to attract enough Democratic votes to trash the bill, less than two days after the Senate unanimously



**This viewer in St. Paul, Minnesota watched the inauguration of President Barack Obama on an analog TV that pulled the signal from the air with antenna known as rabbit ears. (Photo by [Sarah Deer](#))**

passed the plan.

The defeat is a setback for the Obama administration and Democrats on Capitol Hill, who are concerned that too many Americans are not ready for the change.

In addition to the recycling program at Best Buy retail stores, many electronics manufacturers are taking back obsolete televisions for recycling.

For instance, Sony has teamed with participating Waste Management eCycling drop-off centers where unwanted Sony products can be recycled for free.

Three of the biggest television makers have formed a company to help manage the mountain of electronics waste that is expected with the start of digital television.

Panasonic, Sharp, and Toshiba have established the Manufacturers Recycling Management Company to operate a national take-back and recycling program that is open to all manufacturers.

As of January 15, the MRM Recycling network began providing recycling opportunities at 280 locations with at least one recycling center located in each state, making it one of the most comprehensive national recycling networks.

"MRM is focused on enhancing the environmental sustainability of individual company brands and product offerings through convenient, environmentally sound and efficient recycling," said David Thompson, president of MRM. "With the establishment of the nationwide recycling program, one of the most comprehensive in the industry, we have proven that collaborative effort is the most effective way to provide consumers with convenient recycling opportunities."

MRM will continue to expand its program and expects to have established at least 800 drop-off locations by 2011.

Once the obsolete televisions are collected, they go to companies that strip out the valuable materials and dispose of the waste. Nationally, only six states enforce laws governing the environmentally safe disposal of old-fashioned monitors called cathode ray tubes - California, Iowa, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Maine.

Electronics Recyclers International is the largest volume recycler of CRTs in the United States and it is endorsed by many environmental groups for its responsible practices. ERI offers the most accurate verification system in the recycling industry, utilizing a bar code tracking system, video verification, and offering environment sustainability reports.

For a list of manufacturers' recycling options, click [here](#) to go to the My Green Electronics website.

For basic information on the analog-to-digital switch from the Federal Communications Commission, click [here](#).