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Energy Efficiency has a Place in the Digital TV Transition

-Purchasing ENERGY STAR[®] qualified DTAs and digital TVs will save consumers money-

MADISON, Wis. (April 17, 2008) - Beginning Feb. 17, 2009, all TV stations will begin broadcasting in digital signals instead of analog. For consumers who receive over-the-air TV, non cable or satellite TV subscribers, a digital-to-analog (DTA) converter box or digital TV will be needed in order to watch TV. There are many factors to consider when purchasing a DTA or digital TV, one of which is energy efficiency. Focus on Energy, Wisconsin's energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, wants to remind consumers to look for the ENERGY STAR[®] when purchasing these new electronic products.

Making an Energy Efficient Conversion

DTAs are designed to convert digital TV broadcast signals to analog signals. For people who don't want to buy a new digital TV set or subscribe to cable or satellite TV, DTAs are the only option for receiving television broadcasts. Unfortunately, some estimates indicate the use of DTAs may cost Americans \$270 million per year in higher electricity bills.

There will be several different types of DTAs to choose from when they become available in the United States in late 2008, but they are not all created equal – or equally energy efficient. Because of this, consumers should remember there are two price tags when buying electronic equipment, the purchase price and the ongoing operation costs, which can add up over time.

Recently the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced specifications for DTAs that will qualify models for the ENERGY STAR – a third party label of energy efficiency. DTAs manufactured to meet ENERGY STAR specifications will operate using a fraction of the energy compared to DTAs currently available on the global market, saving consumers money on energy bills.

The energy saved also means a healthier environment, with fewer fossil fuels needed to produce electricity, resulting in lower greenhouse gas emission levels. If all DTAs meet ENERGY STAR specifications, Americans could save 13 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) and more than \$1 billion in energy costs and the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions would be equivalent to those of one million cars.

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“ENERGY STAR qualified DTAs will be just as affordable as standard models and they will perform all the same functions while consuming less energy,” explained Bobbi Fey, Focus on Energy Program Manager. “They’ll also be equipped with additional features that will add to their level of efficiency. For example, ENERGY STAR qualified DTAs will automatically power down after extended periods of inactivity.”

For those who choose the option of purchasing a digital TV, looking for the ENERGY STAR is still a good idea, added Fey. ENERGY STAR qualified TVs use about 30 percent less energy than their standard model counterparts. When searching for a new flat panel TV, Focus on Energy recommends purchasing LCD models over plasma because they use less energy.

What is the ENERGY STAR?

ENERGY STAR is a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Products that have earned the ENERGY STAR have met strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and DOE. Products that have earned the ENERGY STAR have been tested as the most energy efficient products on the market. By looking for the ENERGY STAR, consumers can guarantee savings on their energy costs.

To learn more about ENERGY STAR qualified products, or for additional information about energy efficiency in homes or at work, call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About Focus on Energy

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not be completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit focusonenergy.com.

About ENERGY STAR

ENERGY STAR was introduced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 as a voluntary market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through increased energy efficiency. Today, ENERGY STAR offers businesses and consumers energy-efficient solutions to save energy, money and help protect the environment for future generations. More than 12,000 organizations are ENERGY STAR partners committed to improving the energy efficiency of products, homes, buildings and businesses. For more information about ENERGY STAR, visit: www.energystar.gov or call toll-free 1-888-STAR-YES (1-888-782-7937).

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