

# Future much clearer for TV antenna users

## ARRIVAL OF DIGITAL TV SIGNALS BY 2011 WILL MEAN MORE CHANNELS, BETTER QUALITY, SAY EXPERTS

Norfolk residents using antennas to pick up TV signals will soon be enjoying the same picture quality as satellite and cable subscribers.

Industry Canada has announced that all Canadian broadcasts will switch from analog to digital format by August 2011.

“What this means is better quality TV for antenna users,” said Gary Copeland, owner of Dover Antenna Service.

Copeland said people usually are afraid of changing technology because they are unfamiliar with the new format.

“But this is great improvement in the way people watch TV,” Copeland said.

The change will require antenna users to either buy a digital converter box to make their older analog television compatible, or buy a new TV with digital tuner. All new televisions have digital tuners. Older, analog televisions do not.

A digital converter box retails between \$300 and \$500 in Canada, but Scott Montgomery of Waterford TV and Appliances suggests users and owners of analog televisions hold off making such a purchase.

“As the time to switch comes closer, I expect the price of these to go down,” he said.

Montgomery and Copeland said depending on the price of digital converters and the condition of your existing analog television, it might be smarter to buy a new TV instead of a converter.

“If you’re going to replace your TV soon, you might as well hold off on buying a converter that will be unneeded down the road with a new TV,” Copeland said.

He expects many people will return to the antenna, once the switch to digital is made.

Already he has installed five antennas in the past two months.

“I get calls that people want to take down their antenna and I explain the change that is happening and suggest they hold off,” Copeland said. “Some agree with me and opt to keep the antenna.”

Montgomery said going digital will benefit rural residents.

“People will get more out of their antenna” he said. “Especially the rural areas where they don’t have cable or satellite options. They’ll get more channels than in the past at a better quality.”

Copeland said the average antenna in the area picks up 25 channels.

“We might get 35 with a digital tuner,” he said, explaining digital signals travel farther.

The digital format will give a clearer picture but “it will come in picture perfect or not at all,” Montgomery said.

Besides a crisp picture, digital broadcasting could potentially open up a bevy of options to antenna users, Montgomery said.

“Now they’re talking about pay-per-view and movies as well as TV guide operation being available,” he said.

- "Future much clearer to TV antenna users," *Simcoe Reformer*, 6 December 2008, front page.