

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding SCGTV Channel Reassignment

What is happening with SCGTV?

As of January 19, Space Coast Government TV will be reassigned from channels 1 and 99 to channel 199 on Bright House Networks cable.

House Bill 529 (The Consumer Choice Act of 2007) was passed during the 2007 legislative session, and was signed into law by Governor Crist on May 18, 2007. The new law allows cable companies to obtain their franchises from the State of Florida, rather than at the municipality or county level. It also specifies that cable or video service providers *may* locate any Public-access, Educational-access, and Government-access (also known as PEG) channels on their lowest digital tier of service. Bright House describes the new channel location as a basic service in a digital format.

How does this affect SCGTV viewers?

Bright House subscribers with basic or standard cable packages will no longer be able to view SCGTV unless they have a newer television with a built-in digital tuner, or rent a cable box that provides access to this channel. Digital cable subscribers will not be affected, other than learning a new channel number.

What will this change cost SCGTV viewers?

For cable customers with digital TVs or digital cable, there is no additional cost. Other viewers will need to rent a cable box from Bright House Networks that provides access to SCGTV, at the cost of \$1.00 per month in addition to their usual cable package.

Do Adelphia and Comcast intend to move SCGTV?

At this time, neither of those cable companies have indicated their intention to move the channels. Cable companies are required to provide 120 days' notice to PEG channels before channel reassignment.

Did Bright House notify citizens of this change?

Bright House advised County staff that they gave the first notice in an advertisement and customer statements in September 2007. Their customer statements in December and January also included notification of the change. Other advertisements and public service announcements regarding the impending change began running in December 2007.

Is cable the only way to view SCGTV? What about satellite?

Cable companies are required by federal law to carry PEG channels; satellite companies are not. Since commercial air-time cannot be sold on these channels, satellite companies have no incentive to offer them to their subscribers.

Why isn't SCGTV offered free, as an over-the-air broadcast channel?

In order to offer SCGTV as a broadcast channel, Brevard County would have to lease television tower space, acquire a license, meet Federal Communications Commission requirements for broadcast stations, and hire additional personnel. This would be an expensive proposition, costing hundreds of thousands of dollars per year.

Has webstreaming SCGTV been considered?

We are looking into the possibility of streaming video on the internet as a solution for non-cable subscribers.

I don't subscribe to cable, nor do have a connection to the internet. How can I see what happened at a county board meeting?

DVD copies of all Board of County Commissioners, Local Planning Agency, Planning and Zoning, Board of Adjustment, and Metropolitan Planning Organization meetings can be purchased from SCGTV. Prices are based on actual costs of supplies and postage and are subject to fluctuations. Meeting length determines the number of DVDs required; each DVD can hold four hours of programming.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Digital TV Transition

Does this move of SCGTV to digital cable have anything to do with the federal requirement for TV stations to broadcast digitally by February 2009?

No. The current requirement to switch from analog to digital only applies to full-power broadcast TV stations, which use the public airwaves to provide free over-the-air programming.

How will the analog-to-digital transition requirement affect cable customers?

Cable companies already have technology in place to capture digital signals and then provide them to their subscribers through their standard cable connection.

How will the analog-to-digital requirement affect people who aren't cable customers?

The federal government is offering \$40 coupons to help television owners buy special converter boxes for older TVs that might not work after the switch to digital broadcasting. This converter box will allow older TVs to receive digital broadcast signals. However, SCGTV is not a broadcast station, and is carried on cable networks only.

Will the digital-to-analog converter box allow basic- or standard-cable subscribers to view SCGTV?

No. Converter boxes from the federal program work only with over-the-air broadcast signals, not cable or satellite service. Cable and satellite customers do not need the boxes.

Where can I get more information about the converter box coupon?

Between Jan. 1, 2008, and March 31, 2009, all U.S. households will be eligible to request up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, to be used toward the purchase of up to two, digital-to-analog converter boxes. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) has responsibility for administering the coupon program. More information can be found at www.dtv2009.gov.