

## Digital Low Power Television Rules Go Into Effect; Sept. 1 is Deadline for Out-of-Core LPTV Stations to Seek Displacement

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The Commission's recent [Order](#) establishing the rules and time line for low power television stations to convert to DTV has now been published in the Federal Register, meaning that most of the new rules regarding the conversion of low power television stations to digital television are now in effect. As we wrote about extensively [here](#), on July 15, 2011, the FCC adopted a Report and Order regarding the transition of low power television stations (LPTV), TV translator, and Class A low power stations to digital. As set forth in that Order, **September 1, 2015** will be the hard date for the conversion of all remaining analog LPTV stations to digital. The Order adopts the specific procedures, rules, and timing of the digital conversion for those stations, and with Friday's publication in the Federal Register, those rules are now in effect, with two exceptions. The extension of the "ancillary and supplementary" rules to LPTV permittees operating pursuant to an STA is still awaiting OMB approval, as is the requirement that stations that have not yet taken steps to convert to digital must notify the FCC of their digital transition plans. This second requirement will force stations to consider their digital future and share their transition plans with the Commission. Once the OMB approves the collection of information inherent in that requirement, that part of the new rules will go into effect, and the FCC will announce the timing and requirements by a further public notice.

The FCC's DTV LPTV Order also established **December 31, 2011** as the deadline for all LPTV and TV translator stations operating on out-of-core channels -- that is Channels 52 to 69 -- to cease operation. Any station that operates outside the core that does not already have a construction permit for a core band operation **must file for a construction permit for the core band by September 1, 2011**. Given that today is August 30th, hopefully out-of-core stations have their ducks in a row and are already on file, or preparing to file displacement applications to move into the core. The FCC states that there will be no hardship extensions of the December 31 deadline -- meaning that such stations must terminate operations no later than December 31 of this year no matter what.

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