

COUNTY OF SONOMA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND PUBLIC WORKS
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DIGITAL TV CONVERSION LIKELY TO CAUSE INCREASED E-WASTE

-- Analog televisions require special disposal if discarded --

March 3, 2009 – Santa Rosa, CA – Beginning February 17 and continuing until June 12, 2009, all full-power television stations throughout the United States will cease analog broadcasts. As a result of this transition to digital broadcasts, anyone who still watches television using an outdoor antenna or “rabbit ears” will need to purchase a converter box for the analog TV; purchase a television with a built-in digital tuner; or subscribe to cable or satellite TV. According to the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, as many as 80 million televisions will become obsolete as a result of this conversion.

“Some television viewers, unfortunately, will discard a perfectly functional TV set rather than adding a digital signal converter box to extend its life,” noted Lisa Steinman, Waste Management Specialist for the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency. “We want to ensure that all Sonoma County residents understand that TVs cannot be discarded in the garbage or dumped along the side of the road.”

Electronic items, including televisions, cannot be discarded in the trash because they contain hazardous materials, such as lead. These hazardous materials can be harmful to people, animals and the environment if they are not properly recycled. In addition, it is illegal to dump televisions or any other items along the side of the road, in creeks, or in other unlicensed locations. Individuals caught dumping may be fined and/or required to perform community service.

Sonoma County offers dozens of options for proper disposal of televisions and other electronic waste, including Sonoma County Refuse Disposal Sites, the Computer Recycling Center, Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire, the Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul. In addition, the Sonoma County Waste Management Agency in partnership with ASL Recycling is conducting electronics recycling events monthly around the county with the next event held March 28-29, 2009 in Santa Rosa at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts. An extensive list of electronics disposal sites can be found at www.KeepSonomaClean.org or in the *Sonoma County Recycling Guide*, in the AT&T Yellow Pages under “R” for “Recycling.”

For complete information about proper disposal or recycling of unwanted goods, consult the Keep Sonoma Clean Web site at www.KeepSonomaClean.org. To report an illegal dump site, visit the Web site or call 877-565-DUMP (3867).

Keep Sonoma Clean is a cooperative effort between the Sonoma County Department of Health Services, Environmental Health Division; the Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works, and the Sonoma County Sheriff, and is funded by a grant from the California Integrated Waste Management Board. Zero Waste – You Make It Happen!

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