 The Feb. 17 date set for the transition from analog to digital television is quickly approaching. All major full power television stations are being required by Congress to convert to digital broadcasting.

 Region One Translator Association, which affects Phillips County residents, is not required to convert all its translators to a digital signal by the Feb. 17 deadline. The transition will take a longer period of time. Some of the translators may be converted by Feb. 17, but most will not be.

 Region One is currently broadcasting digital signals for Denver channel 12 over channels Yuma 28, Holyoke 27, Ovid 45, Wray 31, Pleasant Valley 24 and Idalia 29 (soon to be up). All other translators are currently broadcasting analog signals.

 While not all translators in Region One plan to convert before Feb. 17, TV viewers still need to ensure their TVs are equipped to receive digital broadcasting. Are you prepared for the transition?

 If an individual uses “rabbit ears” or a rooftop antenna with their analog TV, they must take action to be prepared for the digital TV transition. They have options including purchasing a converter box that will plug in to an existing analog TV set; connecting the TV to cable, satellite or other pay service; or buying a TV with a digital tuner.

 Converter boxes may be purchased locally at Bill’s Radio and TV in Holyoke. Patricia Olofson of Bill’s Radio and TV said they will accept the coupons as part of the government’s Converter Box Coupon Program.

 Every U.S. household is eligible to receive up to two coupons (while supplies last), worth $40 each, which can be used toward the purchase of the converter box. The coupon will expire 90 days after mailing.

 Mail-in applications are available at Bill’s Radio and TV. Individuals may also apply online at www.dtv.gov or by phone at 1-888-DTV-2009. The last day to request coupons is March 31. Olofson suggests individuals apply for coupons as soon as possible. Money set aside for the coupon program is being used up quickly with an increase in applicants during the past few months.

 TV viewers who subscribe to cable TV or a satellite service do not need to get a converter box. The cable or satellite provider will take care of conversion issues.

 Sharon Crist of PC Telcom reports they have done everything they need to do on their end to ensure the process goes smoothly. PC Telcom cable TV customers will not need to purchase a converter box or a new TV with digital capabilities.

 In addition, TVs purchased within the last four years should have DTV capabilities, and a converter box is not necessary. All TVs manufactured after March 2007 are required to have digital tuners. Before 1998 digital tuner TVs were not available.

 If there is a question concerning the digital capabilities of a TV, check the manual for labels such as “Integrated Digital Tuner,” “Digital Tuner Built-In,” “Digital Receiver” or “DTV.”

 For more information on the switch to DTV, please visit www.dtv2009solutions.com, www.dtv.gov or www.dtvanswers.com.