

THE VERMONT
ASSOCIATION OF
BROADCASTERS

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HOUSE MAJORITY OPPOSES PERFORMANCE TAX

Four additional House members have voiced opposition to the recording industry-backed effort to levy a "new performance fee, tax, royalty or other charge" on local radio stations for music airplay. The Congressional opposition to the label-led campaign now stands at 219, representing a majority of the 435-member U.S. House.

NAB Executive VP Dennis Wharton says, "We will continue to educate policymakers on the devastating impact this RIAA tax would have on America's hometown radio stations."

ROYALTY DEAL NEAR

Radio Online reports the National Music Publishers Association has reached a deal on fees for interactive streaming and limited downloads of music. Talks continue on other issues, including permanent music downloads and ringtones.

The terms of the deal will not be unveiled until the issues go before the three judges on the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board this month. The judges are expected to set digital royalty rates for a five-year period this October.

AFFIDAVIT REMINDER

Please send your station's Army National Guard and U.S. Coast Guard affidavits to:

Jim Condon

500A Dalton Drive

Colchester, VT 05446

Please run current spots TFN.

THANK YOU for airing the VAB NCSA spots!

The VAB Voice



The VAB VOICE

July, 2008

Plenty of DTV Questions at Senior Center Meetings



South Strafford, VT --- If the questions raised at two recent DTV information meetings at Vermont senior citizen centers are any indication, many Vermont residents still have a lot of questions about the coming switch to DTV.

On Feb. 18, 2009, all full-power TV stations in the US will only broadcast in digital. If your TV set uses a rooftop antenna or a rabbit-ears antenna, you will likely need a Digital Converter box. Coupons are available for free to save \$40 off the cost of the converter boxes, which range in price from \$40-60.

Many of the seniors at a June 11 luncheon at the South Strafford senior center were unclear if they needed a converter box if they subscribe to cable or satellite TV. The answer, to their relief, is "No." If you receive cable or satellite, you'll be all set for the transition.

One satellite subscriber asked why he doesn't receive the new digital channels

now. For instance, WCAX offers a separate digital channel that offers weather around the clock, as well as a 10 P.M. newscast. VAB Executive Director Jim Condon explained the new digital channels will show up on the satellite and cable systems before the switch takes place next February.

At a June 24 senior luncheon in South Royalton, one gentleman wanted to know if his satellite dish was the same as a rooftop antenna, and again the answer was, "No." Since he receives satellite TV, he'll be all set. If you have an old-style rooftop antenna, you may need a converter box.



Another gentleman said he had recently purchased a new TV set and wanted to know if he'll need a converter box. Chances are he will not, since the vast ma-

majority of sets sold in the past two years have come equipped with digital tuners. There should be an indication on the set itself that it is digital ready.

That question led to a discussion of HDTV. The seniors were reminded they do not need an HDTV set to receive digital television. Many of the seniors jotted down the number to call for the coupons: 1-888-DTV-2009. Consumers may also go the DTV website to get their coupons: www.dtvanswers.com.

There are an estimated 246,250 TV households in the State of Vermont. Of those, an estimated 31,340 households have at least one over-the-air (OTA) set. And, it's believed that slightly more than half of those households, about 16,000, only receive OTA television.

As of June, 2008, more than 21,000 DTV coupons had been requested by Vermont households. Vermont has one of the highest cable and satellite penetration rates in the country, nearly 90 percent. Nationally, the average cable/satellite penetration rate is about 82 percent.

Feedback Sought for First-ever Vermont Amber Alert

It's something we're prepared for, but something we had hoped would never be necessary. Unfortunately, at 5 P.M. on Thursday, June 26th, Vermont State Police and the Vermont Department of Emergency Management issued an Amber Alert when 12-year-old Brooke Bennett of Braintree was reported missing. The girl's body was discovered a few days later, and her uncle was charged in the case.

When an Amber Alert is issued, it means a missing child may be in imminent danger and time is of the essence. Was your station able to relay the alert without any problems? How was the audio quality? Was it easy to understand the wording of the message? Those are the questions being asked by Vermont's Emergency Management office.

Your radio station should have received a brief survey from the state asking the questions above. If you did not receive it, you can find it under the "Amber Alert" button on the VAB website at www.vab.org.

Recently, some stations reported audio reception problems from the Emergency Management office in Waterbury as well as the National Weather Service transmitter on Mount Mansfield. Those problems arose during the recent heavy thunderstorms that rolled through Vermont.

Emergency Management is working with the VAB to arrange at least one all-day EAS seminar to address those and other EAS/Amber Alert issues. Keep your eyes on your mailbox and on our website, www.vab.org, for the seminar information once the schedule is announced.

Meanwhile, our legal counsel has advised us that the FCC is actively looking for those sta-



tions who are not currently in compliance. Here are the details from attorney David Oxenford:

On June 13, the FCC issued forfeiture orders to two broadcast stations (not in Vermont) for violating the current EAS Rules. In each case the violations were based on the fact that neither station had their EAS encoder/decoder properly installed and operational.

The Emergency Alert System now falls under the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau of the FCC. It is important to remember that, even though the FCC is considering a new Next Generation Emergency Alert System, broadcasters must comply with all the existing regulations until such time as the FCC adopts new Rules.

Some Key EAS rules:

- EAS Participants are responsible for ensuring that EAS Encoders, EAS Decoders and Attention Signal generating and receiving equipment used as part of the EAS are installed so that the monitoring and transmitting functions are available during the times the stations are in operation.
- If the encoder or decoder becomes defective, the station may operate without the defective equipment pending its repair or replacement for 60 days without further FCC authority. Entries shall be made in the broadcast station log showing the date and time the equipment was removed and restored to service. For

training purposes, the required monthly test script must still be transmitted.

- After 60 days, an informal request shall be submitted to the District Director of the FCC field office serving the area in which the EAS Participant is located for additional time.
- Required monthly tests originate from Local or State Primary sources. The time and script content will be developed by State Emergency Communications Committees in cooperation with affected EAS Participants. Monthly tests must be retransmitted within 60 minutes of receipt.



- Analog and digital AM, FM, and TV broadcast stations must conduct tests of the EAS header and EOM codes at least once a week at random days and times. Effective December 31, 2006, DAB stations must conduct these tests on all audio streams. Effective December 31, 2006, DTV stations must conduct these tests on all program streams.
- EAS Participants must determine the cause of any failure to receive the required tests or activations and appropriate entries must be made in the station log.
- Automatic interrupt of programming and transmission of EAS messages are required when facilities are unattended.

For more EAS resources, please visit www.vab.org.

HALL OF FAME SPOTLIGHT:



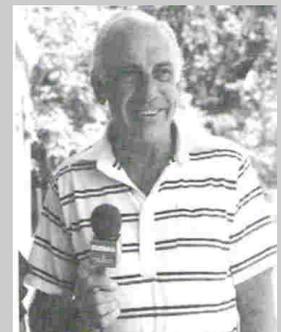
Rex Marshall

Born in New Jersey in 1919, Rex Marshall began a long and star-studded broadcasting career in 1937 in Boston.

An unflappable announcer, Rex achieved national fame as the announcer for the "Mister Peepers" show starring Wally Cox. He was also the announcer for "Tom Corbett's Space Cadets" and was, most famously, the longtime spokesman for Reynolds Aluminum.

In 1948, Rex helped put WPIX-TV Channel 11 on the air in New York, and was the station's reporter at the 1948 Republican National Convention. He later returned to WPIX as their news anchor from 1967-68.

In 1966, he bought WVTR-AM (now WNHV) in White River Junction, where he hosted "Breakfast at the Hanover Inn." He put WNHV-FM (now WXLF) on the air in 1969. He remained active with his stations until his death in 1983. Rex was a charter member of the VAB Hall of Fame.



REX MARSHALL

For more information, visit the VAB Hall of Fame at www.vab.org.