

# FCC Consumer Advisory

## OPERATION OF WIRELESS MICROPHONES (AND SIMILAR DEVICES) IN 700 MHz BAND PROHIBITED AFTER JUNE 12, 2010

**Under a new FCC rule, anyone who uses a wireless microphone (or similar device) that operates in the 700 MHz Band must stop operating their wireless microphone (or similar device) no later than June 12, 2010.**

All users of 700 MHz Band wireless microphones (and similar devices) who wish to continue to use their equipment – including users such as theaters, churches, schools, conference centers, theme parks, and musicians – will need to retune or replace, if necessary their equipment no later than June 12, 2010. **Wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate outside of the 700 MHz Band are not affected by the FCC's actions and may continue to operate.**

### **Why did the FCC make this rule?**

Certain wireless microphones (and similar devices) have operated in frequencies that are needed for public safety. When this equipment was first designed, the frequencies they used were in between the frequencies that television stations used to broadcast television programs. With the completion of the digital television (DTV) transition on June 12, 2009, television stations no longer use the frequencies between 698 and 806 MHz (the 700 MHz Band) for broadcast. These frequencies are now being used by public safety entities (such as police, fire and emergency services) and by commercial providers of wireless services (such as wireless broadband services).

The wireless microphones (and similar devices) that had been operating in the old TV broadcast channels can cause harmful interference to these public safety and wireless consumer services. Therefore, all users of wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate on any of the frequencies in the 700 MHz Band – including both licensed users (under Part 74) and unlicensed users – have to stop operating in this band.

The FCC is only prohibiting the use of wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate in the 700 MHz Band. You may continue to use wireless microphones (and similar devices) that operate on other broadcast frequencies. Microphones and similar devices with cords are not affected by the FCC's decision.

### **What is a "Similar Device" to a Wireless Microphone?**

Equipment that is a "similar device" to a wireless microphone is also known as equipment for a "low power auxiliary station". Typically these devices can transmit over distances of 100 meters. Examples devices include wireless intercoms, wireless in-ear monitors ("IEM"), wireless audio instrument links, and wireless cueing equipment (aka "IFB".)



### **How to Determine if Your Equipment is Operating in the 700 MHz Band**

Some wireless microphones (and similar devices) are marked with the frequency the device uses. If information on the device indicates that it operates on frequencies between 698 and 806 MHz then the device uses the 700 MHz Band and may NOT be used after June 12, 2010.

In addition, the FCC's website provides information about which wireless microphones currently operate in the 700 MHz Band at [www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/). Consumers may look up equipment by manufacturer. The website also includes information about how to contact manufacturers for more detailed information about wireless microphone equipment. In addition, interested parties may call the FCC at 888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) where staff will be able to help consumers determine if their equipment is affected.

Consumers may also be able to contact equipment manufacturers for more information about their equipment. Contact information for the equipment manufacturers will be on the website at [www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/manufacturers.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/manufacturers.html).

### **Retuning or Replacing Existing 700 MHz Band Equipment May be Possible in Some Instances**

Some wireless microphone (and similar device) equipment may be able to be retuned to operate outside of the 700 MHz Band. Consumers should contact the manufacturer to determine if retuning is possible and if it is cost-effective. If the equipment cannot be retuned to operate outside of the 700 MHz Band, the consumer will need to purchase new equipment. Wireless microphones and other electronic equipment should be recycled. Consumers should check with their local household hazardous waste collection program for disposal information.

### **Some Operations May Need To Stop Earlier Than June 12, 2010**

In certain instances, wireless microphone (and similar device) users may be required to stop using their 700 MHz Band devices immediately. In other instances there may be a 60 day notice informing users that they must stop using their devices.

#### When Use Must Stop Immediately

All wireless microphone users that cause harmful interference to a 700 MHz public safety or commercial licensee must cease operations immediately. If a consumer is informed that the device the consumer is using is causing harmful interference, the consumer must cease operations immediately.

#### 60 Day Notice to Stop Use (Early Clearing Process)

In some instances, public safety and commercial licensees may need to initiate their services in the 700 MHz Band before June 12, 2010. In these instances, users of 700 MHz Band wireless microphones will be required to stop using their devices prior to June 12, 2010. This is called the "Early Clearing Process."

There are two ways that wireless microphone (and similar device) users may become aware of an Early Clearing Process that affects them. In both instances, wireless microphone users are required to cease operations within 60 days of the notice.

- 1) The FCC will issue a Public Notice identifying markets where wireless microphone operations must cease. The Public Notices and summary information will be available on the FCC's website [www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/) or



- 2) Any 700 MHz Band public safety or commercial licensee may notify any entity operating low power auxiliary stations that the licensee is going to initiate use of their spectrum.

In the event that both of these notice provisions are used, the wireless microphone user will be required to stop operations based on the earlier of the two termination dates.

### **What Happens If Someone Does Not Stop Using a 700 MHz Band Wireless Microphone?**

Using the 700 MHz Band for a wireless microphone (or a similar device) after June 12, 2010 could be extremely dangerous and could even be life threatening. Police and fire departments, and other public safety groups, use frequencies in the 700 MHz Band. Interference from wireless microphones can affect the ability of public safety groups to receive information over the air and respond to emergencies. Harmful interference to these communications could put you or public safety personnel in grave danger. In addition, use of your microphone can cause unlawful interference to consumer services provided using the 700 MHz Band. Failure to comply with this FCC requirement may lead to civil and/or criminal penalties. This will be determined by the FCC and law enforcement on a case by case basis.

### **Part 74 Licensees**

Under the Commission's Part 74 rules, certain licensees were permitted to operate their wireless microphones (or similar devices) in the 700 MHz Band as well as in other specified bands. After June 12, 2010, Part 74 licensees will no longer be permitted to operate in the 700 MHz Band. Part 74 licensees may continue to operate in the other, non-700 MHz Bands identified in their licenses, including in the core TV bands (i.e. channels 2-51, excluding channel 37), without further Commission action. For more information please go to [www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/wirelessmicrophones/).

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