



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

The Worst I've Ever Seen! **When RFR Protection Runs Amok**

[December 2010] As broadcasters we are – or should be - aware of the areas where RF radiation can be dangerous at our transmission sites as well as the extent OSHA has focused more attention on measurement and protection.

At one time, tower crews regularly would climb through operating FM antennas or merely jump onto an operating AM stick. Today, with much more science behind us, we are much more sensitized to the interaction of radio waves and the human body.

So now the routine, especially at shared sites, is checking the RF exposure meters, RF suits, coordinated power reductions, or just plain go off the air for installations and repairs – unless there is an auxiliary antenna and/or site that can be brought on line. With the required warning signs, even non-broadcasters are getting more and more cautious around transmitting antennas.

Of course, as with any precaution, things can get a bit out of hand.

A VERY CAUTIOUS CONTRACTOR

Recently we heard this story about this older air conditioning man along his new helper that came to a broadcast site a couple of years ago to repair an A/C unit.

On the way up to the site the mechanic instructed his younger helper to be careful –not to be touching anything because of “all the RF that was flying around on site.”

It seemed like he was suggesting a decent precaution, and at least he was instructing his assistant to err on the side of safety.

Nevertheless, when he got out of the truck it was apparent that his level of concern was more than usual. The engineer that took this picture realized the mechanic was genuinely scared about standing next to the tower.

As you can see here, he was wearing this homemade tin foil family jewel protector. Talk about priceless!

The fellow's name and location are redacted to protect the ... err ... protected.



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