



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

The Worst I've Ever Seen! Keeping the Lights On – More or Less

[July 2015] This is another in our series of pictures that come from real installations, pictures that sort of make you scratch your head a bit. Our friend, the late Richard Haskey, would put it this way: "That's the worst I've ever seen!" And then he would smile.

Sometimes you just have to improvise to stay on the air.

Many engineers will recall how it was, especially in the 60's and 70's, as modulation transformers were often hit with ever higher modulation levels – until some of the windings shorted out. The solution was to put the modulation transformer on a couple of pieces of wood.

Of course, that was not really "good engineering practice," as the transformer frame was now at a pretty high potential. But it did get the station back on the air.

A similar makeshift approach to a solution is shown here.

Normally, a pair of Austin Rings (the interlocking rings you can see) is normally used on AM towers to get the AC for tower lighting past the tower base insulator. The size of the rings usually depends upon the load and/or tower height.

However, in this picture we see something happened to the support for the rings. The interesting part is how the station kept the lights on, while dealing with the problem.



Now the challenge is to go back and make more permanent repairs.

Or, as often is the case: will they?

Do you have a picture to share? Please note our goal is not to embarrass anyone, so we do not say where these stations are located or use their call letters. Our goal is to learn from others' experiences and, ok, perhaps have a smile or two. Just send to editor@theBDR.net Thanks!

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