

FIGHTING THE SUMMER SUN

In the summertime heat—at NTC, in Iraq or elsewhere—maintenance of radio sets and other electronic equipment is tough. It's easy for heat to damage equipment.

Here are a few high-temperature maintenance tips:

Good Moisture

Put damp rags on the tops of radios to keep them cool. Make sure the rags are damp, not soaking wet. Soggy rags lead to water inside the radio. Some of you have tried letting ice melt on top of a set. Don't! That much water will get inside and do damage. However, ice laid against a set can do some cooling without getting water into the equipment. Try large plastic bags to hold the ice.

Before you put on the damp rag or use ice on the sides, make sure all screws are screwed down tight and all seals are in good condition.

Of course, whenever possible, shade your radio. Use cardboard or your vehicle's canvas top. Anything that keeps the glaring sun off the radio will help as long as it doesn't hold in the heat.

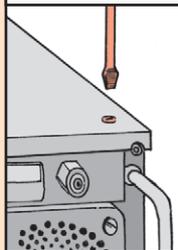
Lessons learned have shown that shade is a valuable tool and that almost anything can be used to give your radio some shady relief.

A fan will run itself to death trying to cool your radio. Give the radio the moisture-and-shade treatment to help the fan.

Cool radio down with damp rags, but...



...first tighten screws and check seals before adding damp rags



Give radio shade!

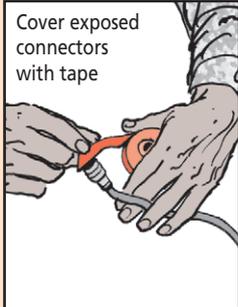
Bad Moisture

Overnight, condensation forms on metal surfaces that are cooler than the air temperature.

This condensation can affect electrical plugs, jacks and connectors. If condensation is affecting your comms connectors, tape over all connectors that may be exposed to moisture overnight. This prevents that moisture from contaminating the contacts.

Plugs should be dried before inserting them into equipment jacks. Excessive moisture or dew should be removed from antenna connectors to prevent arcing.

Cover exposed connectors with tape

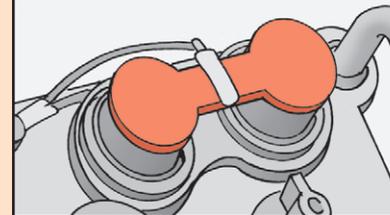


No Moisture

Static electricity is common in areas of extreme, dry heat. It's caused by wind-blown debris and extremely low humidity. Poor grounding conditions aggravate the problem. Make sure your equipment is properly grounded.

Be sure to use tip caps on all antennas to cut down on wind-caused static discharges.

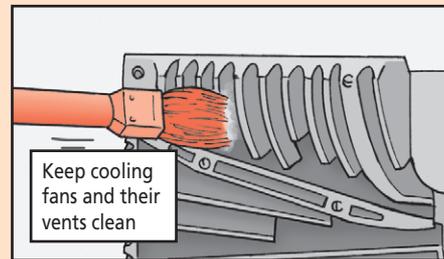
Keep caps on radio connectors, too



A Little More Cleaning

Keep all cooling fans clean and their vents clear of all clogging sand and dirt. Dirt magnifies the bad results of high temperatures.

Use a brush or compressed air—whatever your equipment TM says—to clean the fan and the areas around it.



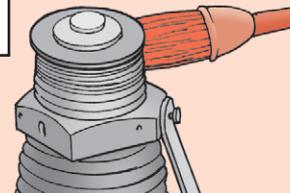
Keep cooling fans and their vents clean

A Few More Things

If you have any broken or missing knobs, switches or connectors, get them replaced before you hit the heat.

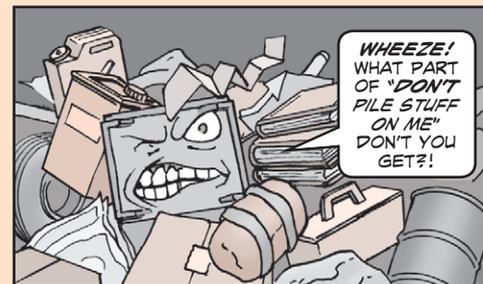
Check the whip antenna's mast base to be sure the contact is clean. If it's dirty, use low-pressure air or a soft brush to clean it.

Clean antenna contact with soft brush or low pressure air



Room to Breathe

Give your communication equipment room to breathe. If you pile gear on or around it, heat quickly builds up. Keep field gear, maps, manuals and other items away from the RT blower fan. Blocking the airflow will cause the heat to build up inside your set.



WHEEZE! WHAT PART OF "DON'T PILE STUFF ON ME" DON'T YOU GET?!