Antennas and Masts...

A DOZEN TIPS TO KEEP YOU SAFE!

1. Before you connect the first piece or drive the first stake in the ground, know each and every caution and warning in the antenna technical manual. Then, do what they tell you to do and don't do what they tell you not to do. And keep your TMs close at hand.

2. Always wear protection. That includes safety goggles, a helmet and gloves. A poke in the eye; a bash on the head; smashed hands, burned palms and pinched fingers are the most common injuries that occur when an antenna is being erected.

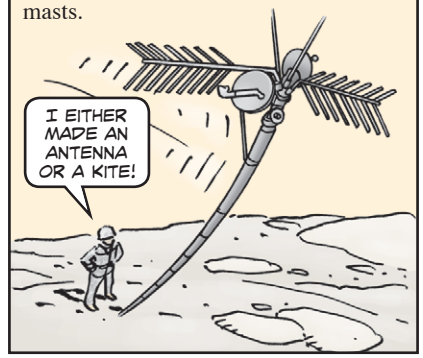
3. Do not erect an antenna in the immediate vicinity of power lines. Treat all unknown lines, wires and cables as if they were power lines. If you must erect in an area with unknown lines, find out what they are, first.

4. Know your guys! Check all guy wires and fasteners for wear and damage before your erection mission. Do not use a damaged guy wire.

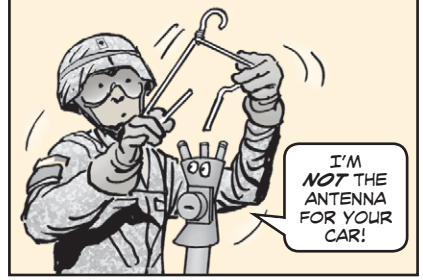
5. Mark your guys! You must put signs or streamers or both on your guy wires to keep Soldiers from tripping over them. A trip can cause an injury and rip the guy wire from the ground, bringing down the antenna.

6. Keep your guys from crossing roadways and other paths of travel. If an antenna location forces you to stretch a guy wire across a path, walkway or roadway and you can't put the antenna anywhere else, close the path and make that closure obvious.

7. Don't mix antenna parts. Even if you can make it fit or make do, don't! Order replacement parts and keep the structural integrity of your antennas and masts.

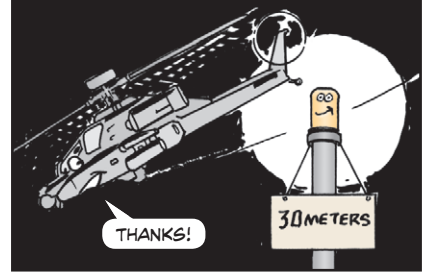


8. Don't modify your antenna. Use only the equipment specified in your technical manual. Too many of you are adapting your antennas to the situation and making hazards in the process. Yes, sometimes wartime measures apply, but make sure you have your commander's approval and that you have thought through all the potential risks.



9. Ground the mast and antenna just like your technical manual tells you. Don't cut corners.

10. Mark the working area surrounding your antenna with warning signs, lights and glow-in-the-dark tape. Use the signs to describe the potential hazards such as tripping, falling parts and shock. Don't forget to light the top of the 30-meter mast to prevent helo strikes!



11. Hold a class and instruct everyone that will regularly be in the vicinity of the antenna about electrical storms and lightning hazards. Do they know what electrical flashover is? Do you?

12. Have a plan in place to deal with any injury that does happen. Don't leave your response to chance. Know what can happen, from shock to concussion to worse. Make sure you and your Soldiers know exactly how to respond.