



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
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COMMISSION ANNOUNCES ANTENNA STRUCTURE LIGHTING RESPONSIBILITIES WITH RESPECT TO YEAR 2000 COMPUTER ISSUE

In light of the Year 2000 ("Y2K") computer date change situation, the Federal Communications Commission is informing licensees and regulatees of their responsibilities under the Commission's rules for keeping antenna structures properly lighted.

Background: Many computers and computer software programs were not designed to recognize the year change from 1999 to 2000 or are otherwise unable to process dates relating to the turn of the millennium. These computers (and the systems they control) might malfunction or cease to work unless they are reprogrammed or replaced by the end of 1999.

Effect on Antenna Structures: Y2K-related problems could cause a structure's light systems to fail, which will create a hazard to air navigation. Computer-controlled devices, such as those found in automatic monitoring and control systems used for antenna structure lighting, are vulnerable to Y2K-related malfunctions, and may fail. Commercial electric power sources may also fail, leaving antenna structures vulnerable to blackouts.

Registrants' Responsibilities: The Commission considers all light outages and malfunctions as extremely serious situations. We therefore expect antenna structure owners (and licensees, who are secondarily responsible in the event of default by the owner) to become aware of the ways in which Y2K-related problems may affect their light systems, and to be prepared to promptly report and remedy all outages and malfunctions.

Owners using an automatic alarm system designed to detect light failures are required to "properly maintain" and to periodically inspect such a system under Section 17.47 of the Commission's rules. Owners should evaluate their systems during the next periodic inspection and must correct any problems before the anticipated date of failure or malfunction, and/or switch to daily visual inspections of their antenna structure lighting.

The Commission's existing antenna lighting rules are designed to protect air navigation in the event of light outages and malfunctions, and are also applicable to owners who experience Y2K-related light problems. Under the rules, antenna structure owners must (1) *display and maintain* the lighting assigned by the Commission; (2) regularly *inspect* lighting and associated control equipment; (3) promptly *report* and (4) *record* light outages, malfunctions, and restoration; and (5) *repair* or *replace* malfunctioning lights and equipment. These rules are reprinted, in part, on the back of this notice.

Additional Information: The Commission provides updated information on the Year 2000 webpage, located at <http://www.fcc.gov/year2000>. For information about antenna structure registration, visit the antenna homepage at <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/antenna>. Commission contact: Bert Weintraub or Jamison Prime, Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, (202) 418-0680. News Media Contact: Meribeth McCarrick, (202) 418-0654

Selected Antenna Structure Lighting Requirements (From Part 17 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 17)

47 C.F.R. § 17.51 Time when lights should be exhibited.

(a) All red obstruction lighting shall be exhibited from sunset to sunrise unless otherwise specified.

(b) All high intensity and medium intensity obstruction lighting shall be exhibited continuously unless otherwise specified.

47 C.F.R. § 17.47 Inspection of antenna structure lights and associated control equipment.

The owner of any antenna structure which is registered with the Commission and has been assigned lighting specifications referenced in this part:

(a)(1) Shall make an observation of the antenna structure's lights at least once each 24 hours either visually or by observing an automatic properly maintained indicator designed to register any failure of such lights, to insure that all such lights are functioning properly as required; or alternatively,

(2) Shall provide and properly maintain an automatic alarm system designed to detect any failure of such lights and to provide indication of such failure to the owner.

(b) Shall inspect at intervals not to exceed 3 months all automatic or mechanical control devices, indicators, and alarm systems associated with the antenna structure lighting to insure that such apparatus is functioning properly.

47 C.F.R. § 17.48 Notification of extinguishment or improper functioning of lights.

The owner of any antenna structure which is registered with the Commission and has been assigned lighting specifications referenced in this part:

(a) Shall report immediately by telephone or telegraph to the nearest Flight Service Station or office of the Federal Aviation Administration* any observed or otherwise known extinguishment or improper functioning of any top steady burning light or any flashing obstruction light, regardless of its position on the antenna structure, not corrected within 30 minutes. Such reports shall set forth the condition of the light or lights, the circumstances which caused the failure, the probable date for restoration of service, the FCC Antenna Structure Registration Number, the height of the structure (AGL and AMSL if known) and the name, title, address, and telephone number of the person making the report. Further notification by telephone or telegraph shall be given immediately upon resumption of normal operation of the light or lights.

(b) An extinguishment or improper functioning of a steady burning side intermediate light or lights, shall be corrected as soon as possible, but notification to the FAA of such extinguishment or improper functioning is not required.

*NOTE: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) uses this notification to issue a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) of the light failure or malfunction. The FAA indicates that toll-free numbers for its flight service stations are listed in most phone books. After 15 days, the FAA automatically deletes the NOTAM. Owners must call back to extend the outage date, when applicable. *(This note is not part of the Commission's rules and is intended only to provide additional information)*

47 C.F.R. § 17.49 Recording of antenna structure light inspections in the owner record.

The owner of each antenna structure which is registered with the Commission and has been assigned lighting specifications referenced in this part must maintain a record of any observed or otherwise known extinguishment or improper functioning of a structure light and include the following information for each such event:

(a) The nature of such extinguishment or improper functioning.

(b) The date and time the extinguishment or improper operation was observed or otherwise noted.

(c) Date and time of FAA notification, if applicable.

(d) The date, time and nature of adjustments, repairs, or replacements made.

47 C.F.R. § 17.56 Maintenance of lighting equipment.

(a) Replacing or repairing of lights, automatic indicators or automatic control or alarm systems shall be accomplished as soon as practicable.

(b) The flash tubes in a high intensity obstruction lighting system shall be replaced whenever the peak effective daytime intensity falls below 200,000 candelas.

FCC Year 2000 Web Page:

<http://www.fcc.gov/year2000>

FCC Antenna Structure Registration Homepage:

<http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/antenna>

FCC National Call Center:

1-888-Call FCC (1-888-225-5322)