

13 NCAC 07F .0606 NON-IONIZING RADIATION

(a) General. Employers shall ensure that employees performing work on communication towers are not exposed to Radio Frequency (RF) Electromagnetic Fields in excess of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits for exposure as prescribed in 47 CFR 1.1310.

(b) Protection from Radiation Exposure.

(1) Employees shall not enter areas where RF exposure levels are above the general population/uncontrolled MPE's described in 47 CFR 1.1310 unless they understand the potential for exposure and can exercise control over the exposure.

(2) Control Procedures. Prior to employees performing work in areas on a communication tower where RF exposure levels exceed the occupational/controlled MPE values stated in 47 CFR 1.1310, the employer shall enact and enforce written control procedures that provide for the reduction, elimination, avoidance or protection from such RF levels. These written control procedures shall include the following:

(A) Reducing the transmitter power to a level that ensures RF exposure levels in areas where employees are working do not exceed the occupational/controlled MPE values stated in 47 CFR 1.1310, and that the transmitter power level is not increased until all employees have ceased working in those areas. If this method is chosen, the transmitter power shall be locked out and tagged out at the reduced level by a competent person in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.147. Prior to removing lock out/tag out devices and restoring the original transmitter power level, all employees shall be notified and the work area shall be checked to ensure that all employees have been safely positioned and removed;

(B) If the transmitter power level in areas where employees are working cannot be reduced and maintained at a level that ensures RF exposure levels do not exceed the occupational/controlled MPE values stated in 47 CFR 1.1310, the transmitter power shall be locked out and tagged out by a competent person in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.147. Prior to removing lock out/tag out devices and restoring the transmitter power level, all employees shall be notified and the work area shall be checked to ensure that all employees have been safely positioned and removed;

(C) If the transmitter power level can not be reduced or eliminated, an employer may permit its employees to access areas where the occupational/controlled MPE values stated in 47 CFR 1.1310 are exceeded if it implements engineering or administrative controls that comply with the FCC's regulations concerning such exposure, including limiting the duration of the exposure and utilizing monitoring equipment, RF protective clothing and other related PPE; or

(D) If an employer cannot ensure that the conditions in Parts (A), (B) or (C), of this Subparagraph, are met, employees shall not be permitted to access areas where RF exposure levels exceed the occupational/controlled MPE values stated in 47 CFR 1.1310.

(c) Use of Controls. Prior to commencing work on a communication tower, a competent person shall assess potential RF hazards of areas which may be accessed by employees in the course of their work, and post temporary signage to indicate areas where the RF hazard exceeds the general population/uncontrolled MPE limits for exposure set forth in 47 CFR 1.1310. Temporary signage shall remain in place while work is performed and the hazard exists.

(d) RF Safety Program. When employees are exposed to RF fields in excess of the general population/uncontrolled MPE limits established in 47 CFR 1.1310 as a consequence of their employment, the employer shall develop, implement, and maintain a written safety and health program with site specific procedures and elements based on the electromagnetic radiation hazards present, in accordance with 13 NCAC 07F .0609(g).

*History Note: Authority G.S. 95-131;
Eff. July 28, 2006;
Pursuant to G.S. 150B-21.3A rule is necessary without substantive public interest Eff. March 1, 2016.*