

TV Antenna Interference With GPS

John Collins, USCG Aux, SBOS ADSO-PE

It has come to the attention of the U.S. Coast Guard and Federal Communications Commission that certain consumer electronics-grade active VHF/UHF marine television antennas can cause operational degradation in the performance of Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers. You may see this interference as a display of inaccurate position information or a complete loss of GPS receiver acquisition and tracking ability.

The interference is not limited to the GPS equipment onboard the vessel with the installed active marine television antennae. There have been reports of interference occurring on other vessels and installations operating up to 2000 feet away from vessels using such antennas.

If you are experiencing recurring outages or degradation of your GPS receiver operation you should perform an on-off test of your TV antenna. If turning off the power to the antenna results in improvement in the GPS receiver performance, the antenna may be the source of interference in the GPS band. In that case, you should contact the manufacturer of the antenna and identify the symptoms.