

Inside Towers

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[Repack, FirstNet All Part of Tower Climber's 'Perfect Storm'](#)



Commerce Communications Subcommittee yesterday on the repack. Photo by Leslie Stimson, *Inside Towers*

Tower companies are facing a climber crunch, a factor to consider as television stations face the upcoming channel repack. The television tall tower work, combined with densification of carrier networks, tower work for FirstNet and upcoming FAA tower marking mandates are all happening at the same time, according to National Association of Tower Erectors Chairman Jim Tracy.

“This is creating the perfect storm for tower companies,” he told lawmakers at the House Commerce Communications Subcommittee on Thursday. During a hearing on the repack, Tracy said NATE has contacted OSHA, the FAA, the FCC and other federal agencies to discuss safety and bring more climbers into the industry. “At present, there are not enough qualified workers to do all this work,” and the demands will be exacerbated by the repack, he testified.

“It’s not enough for people to want these jobs. They have to be physically and mentally capable of performing the task,” he said. He described tall TV towers as “big iron” and told *Inside Towers* after the hearing, that television antennas can weigh hundreds of pounds. NATE produced a [video](#) describing the repack work to retrain wireless tower climbers for the specialized work; it’s also reaching out to community colleges and the military to entice returning veterans, he said. [Continue Reading](#)



Wireless, Tower, Broadcast Industries Prep for Irma

Representatives of the wireless, tower and broadcast industries told members of Congress Thursday they're hard at work preparing for Hurricane Irma.

CTIA VP Regulatory Affairs Scott Bergmann told members of the House Commerce Communications Subcommittee on Thursday wireless carriers rolled out a network resiliency framework last year; it involved much pre-planning before Harvey made landfall.

Calling Harvey an "unprecedented event," Bergmann said 95 percent of the cell tower sites remained operational during and after the storm. Additionally, "many 911 calls" and Wireless Emergency Alerts went over the carriers networks. "Now, we're talking about another hurricane," he said, referring to Irma. "Wireless companies are doing whatever they can now to prepare for Irma and educate consumers," said Bergmann.

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said this week the Greater Harris County 911 Center in Houston he toured received more than 3,100 calls per hour at Harvey's peak (*see other story below*).

Florida

Irma Propels Comcast to Offer State-Wide Hotspot Access to All

Amid news outlets focusing on Irma's impending mischief and Florida residents seeking refuge, Comcast has opened its 137,000 WiFi hotspot locations (both indoors and outdoors) throughout the state of Florida to non-customers. The *Palm Beach Post* reported that the opening of Xfinity WiFi hotspots to non-customers is an effort to help keep residents and emergency workers connected, in advance of the storm.

According to Amy Smith, senior vice president for Comcast's Florida Region, "We know it's critically important for everyone to have a means of communication at their disposal before, during and after a storm with the potential impact of Hurricane Irma. By activating our WiFi hotspot network across the state now before the storm, we increase the chance that more people can stay connected. It's something we're proud to do for our communities and our state at a time when we all need to support each other." For a map of Xfinity WiFi hotspots, visit Xfinity.com/wifi.

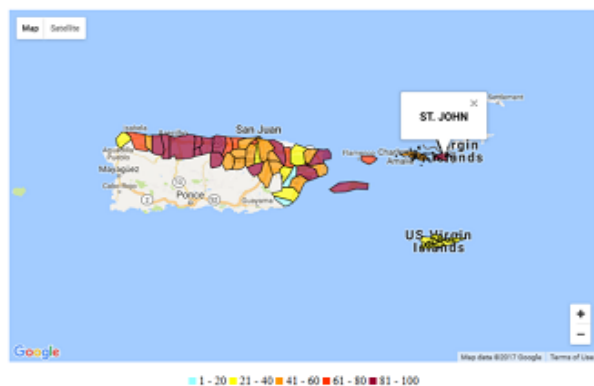


Irma Clobbers Cell Tower Sites In Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands

Hurricane Irma has knocked out more than 50 percent of the cell tower sites in the 44 counties of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin

Percent Cell Sites Out-of-Service By County

9/7/2017 12:10:05 PM



This image shows the percentage of cell sites that were out of service by county as of mid-day Thursday. Source: FCC

Islands being reported to the FCC. According to the agency's Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS), 55.2 percent of the sites were not operational as of noon yesterday. Of the 719 sites being reported, 397 were not working.

Four emergency call centers were not working Thursday. There are widespread power outages, and the FCC received reports that a large percentage of consumers are without either wireline or cable service. No broadcast stations were reported to be off-air, however the FCC cautions there's "limited input" into DIRS from this sector.

Tower Ticker

September 7, 2017 at Close

| Symbol | Price | Change | % Change | Day Low | Volume | Day High | 52 Week High | 53 Week Low |
|--------|--------|--------|----------|---------|---------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| AMT | 146.99 | +0.92 | +0.63% | 146.02 | 1.76M | 147.03 | 148.71 | 99.72 |
| AMX | 18.49 | +0.14 | +0.76% | 18.34 | 2.22M | 18.65 | 19.05 | 11.02 |
| CCI | 106.99 | +0.98 | +0.92% | 106.01 | 1.83M | 107.19 | 108.88 | 79.38 |
| COMM | 33.01 | +0.29 | +0.89% | 32.73 | 1.29M | 33.06 | 42.75 | 29.03 |
| CTL | 18.66 | -0.34 | -1.79% | 18.47 | 12.49M | 19.20 | 33.45 | 18.41 |
| DY | 78.73 | -0.25 | -0.32% | 78.28 | 651.81k | 80.32 | 110.64 | 70.33 |
| ERIC | 5.795 | +0.065 | +1.13% | 5.76 | 1.82M | 5.81 | 7.47 | 4.83 |
| FTR | 13.41 | -0.54 | -3.87% | 13.31 | 2.21M | 14.12 | 72.00 | 11.65 |
| LVLT | 52.99 | -0.48 | -0.90% | 52.67 | 3.36M | 53.72 | 64.61 | 44.01 |
| S | 7.97 | -0.16 | -1.97% | 7.93 | 12.28M | 8.18 | 9.65 | 5.83 |
| SBAC | 150.65 | +0.15 | +0.10% | 149.86 | 1.17M | 151.22 | 154.71 | 95.66 |
| T | 35.60 | -0.97 | -2.65% | 35.58 | 48.62M | 36.79 | 43.03 | 35.58 |
| TMUS | 63.34 | -0.45 | -0.71% | 63.14 | 1.79M | 64.16 | 68.88 | 44.35 |
| UNIT | 18.81 | -0.31 | -1.62% | 18.80 | 1.74M | 19.44 | 32.73 | 18.14 |
| VZ | 46.20 | -0.71 | -1.51% | 46.07 | 16.59M | 47.21 | 54.83 | 42.80 |
| ZAYO | 34.21 | -0.09 | -0.26% | 34.11 | 2.54M | 34.61 | 35.65 | 28.15 |



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Ohio

Residents Grumble, Verizon Counters With \$1,000 a Month

The [Village of Whitehouse](#) officials and residents met recently to discuss the installation of a possible new cell tower in Sandra Park, according to *WNWO-TV*, and the voiced concerns were nothing new to Verizon reps in attendance.

Residents alluded to potential radiation from the tower by citing a study on a similar tower in Europe that was said to cause nearby cows to stop producing milk.

With the proposed location less than a block from Fallen Timbers Middle School, parents of students raised concerns about its proximity.

Bill May, President of Village Council, tried to address those fears by telling *WNWO-TV*, "it's nothing new to us. It's nothing new really to most residents. It's just a situation of letting everybody know what it is. Where it's going to be. How, if it's going to impact anybody, we'll let them know. Which at this point in time, I don't see that there's any impact at all."

Verizon is offering the town \$1,000 per month in revenue which will then go to the city's general fund.

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Small But Mighty: Arizona State Law Encourages WCF Infrastructure

Mobile users demand coverage, but some of the infrastructure has become much more visible than simply an oasis in the desert. That's why Arizona state and county laws and ordinances are fostering installation of Wireless Communication Facilities (WCFs) on everything from rural utility poles to suburban traffic-light structures, to encourage more but smaller setups, reported the *North Phoenix News*.

According to Darren Gerard, Maricopa County deputy director of planning services, news ordinances passed in 2014 "permit antennas on just about any structure so long as size limits and other guidelines are met. In theory, a homeowner could put a WCF on their property if the 80-foot pole (the maximum allowed) is at least 160 feet from

property boundaries.”

The new permit process also doesn't require notifying neighbors of infrastructure installation and there are already over 200 WCFs across New River, Desert Hills, and Maricopa County, where the FCC sets the price for leasing space on utility poles. [Continue Reading](#)



DAS/Small Cells

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Pai Credits DAS, WiFi for Keeping Harvey Evacuees Connected

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai was on the ground in Texas this week, touring areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey. He focused on the performance of communications networks during and after the storm.

Pai visited the Greater Harris County 911 Emergency Network on Tuesday, the largest 911 system in the state. Many dispatchers who had been moved to the facility from another public safety answering point, worked continuously throughout the storm and several slept in the call center as their own homes were flooded, according to the agency. "Officials told me they received more than 3,100 calls per hour at the peak of Harvey—that's 10 times the normal volume for 911 calls," said Pai. [Continue Reading](#)

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Tower Safety

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OSHA Offers Webinar on Electrical Safety

Overview: Electrical power-line workers face serious and life-threatening hazards each day, often times in the act of making repairs and restoring power to electrical utility systems. Even during construction activity, these workers must account for the same inherent dangers presented by the systems they work on, the equipment and tools they use, and the environment they work in. With advances in knowledge, regulations, and personal protective equipment, the industry has significantly improved worker safety in recent decades. However, it remains one of the top ten most dangerous jobs in the United States, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[Register](#)

- Date: Thursday October 5, 2017
- Time: 2 p.m. (EST) 11 a.m. (PST)

This webinar provides an overview of best practices and procedures in four key areas where focused efforts can continue to reduce injury risks: [Continue Reading](#)



Your safety is our mission

National Association of Tower Erectors
The industry leader in tower climber safety



International

Australia

Aussies Remove 2 GHz Spectrum Cap for Bidders

The Australian government announced plans to remove the current cap on spectrum holdings in the 2 GHz band, to allow all operators to bid for leftover spectrum from previous actions, according to *Telecomasia*.

But the government, acting on the advice of competition regulator ACCC, has elected to retain the current allocation limits in the 1800 MHz band. Meanwhile, there will continue to be no allocation limits on holdings in the 2.3 GHz and 3.4 GHz bands, communications minister Mitch Fifield [announced](#).

The government plans to hold a multiband residual lots auction late this year, and has decided to hold a single auction process for all four bands, rather than several smaller auctions. Telecoms regulator ACMA will conduct the auction on behalf of the government. The government has meanwhile proposed a new spectrum management reform that will replace current legislative arrangements with new legislation that seeks to streamline licensing for a simpler and more flexible framework, *Telecomasia* reported.

Tower Tribe

Digicel Appoints New CEO for Anguilla



Kerchelle Jn Charles-Hodge

Digicel today announced the appointment of Kerchelle Jn Charles-Hodge as Chief Executive Officer for its [Anguilla](#) operations, effective August 2017. In this role, Kerchelle will have oversight for all operational and business excellence, while adopting a digital first strategy across the business.

A St. Lucian-national, Kerchelle brings over eleven years' experience to this role, having joined Digicel in 2006 as a Marketing Executive for Digicel St. Lucia. Since then, her drive, passion and dedication have propelled her growth from an entry level position to CEO in just over a decade. Following an eight-month stint as part of launch team in The British Virgin Islands, Kerchelle was promoted to Marketing Manager in St. Lucia where she honed her skills for the next seven years. During this time, she also seconded in St. Kitts and Nevis as Head of Marketing and provided commercial support for the launch of 4G in Anguilla. In March 2014, she returned to Anguilla as Head of Commercial and played an integral role in the successful merger of Caribbean Cable Communications (CCC) with Digicel.

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FCC Recent Releases

FCC Regulatory Fees Due September 26

FCC licensees can pay their Fiscal Year 2017 regulatory fees now through September 26. Payment must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern or else the agency is required to impose a 25 percent late fee. Find industry specific guidance for wireline, wireless and broadcasting fees [here](#).

Broadcasting

Radio, Wireless Duke It Out In-Dash



John Ellis, founder of John Ellis & Associates; Photo by Leslie Stimson, *Inside Towers*

The radio industry is at a crossroads when it comes to its presence in the dashboard. Stations fear becoming lost in a sea of app logos on automakers' evolving dashboard displays — or worse — as cars become autonomous vehicles.

Radio competes with smartphones more and more in the dashboard and as that space in the vehicle evolves, radio risks losing its visibility, said John Ellis, founder of John Ellis & Associates, during a panel discussion on Tuesday afternoon at the NAB and RAB [Radio Show](#). He described a demonstration Ford is displaying at the show taking place this week in Austin, Texas. "We're talking about radio dot 2.0, to re-envision it in a way that Apple and other companies" can develop it "and give OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) a

chance to deliver customizable, over-the-air broadcasts."

He feels radio in its current form is a placeholder; that the medium hasn't yet fully explored connectivity. "These guys are," he said, meaning the wireless industry as he held up a smartphone. [Continue Reading](#)

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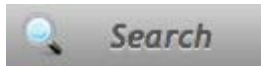
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Staffing/Recruiting

[Tower-Pro.com](#), *Inside Towers'* companion Buyer's Guide has over 3,500 listings in 130+ categories. Each month we will be featuring one of our primary categories. This month, we're highlighting Staffing & Recruiting.



Should your company be in one of these categories?

See if you're listed and if you only have a basic listing, find out why you should upgrade [here](#).

We will be randomly highlighting our enhanced listings in Inside Towers for added exposure.

[Email us](#) with questions or for assistance.

Product Showcase

Brought to you by:



BKON Extension Bracket

Attaches to existing incandescent base Flip top design for simple installation - Your Nesting Solution



The BKON extension bracket's primary use is to add extra height to the beacons that have been blocked by antennas. This is a simple way to get the beacons out where they can be visible and keep your towers safe.

This bracket uses two "U" Bolts that cross lock to keep it set at its designated height and provide a safe way to grab the bracket. It has a range of 31"-53." It is not supposed to go any higher than were it is painted RED. UL Listed / NFPA compliance jumper required to meet standard.

[Click Here for Product Spec Sheet](#)

Tower Shots



500 feet above Boca Raton, FL with the Florida Turnpike in the background.
Contributed by Sean Gilhooley, DFB Communication.

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