

*Weird, Odd,
Abe-Normal,
Stealthy Antennas*

By Paul Strickland, WB9SUG

Rules and regulations created by a variety of “Do-Goooder” people have befallen ham radio operators all over the country. The Almighty Antenna is not to be seen; towers with beams, big verticals, long wires, and even shorter VHF, UHF and SHF antennas can end up on the endangered species list. These “Do Gooders” can be beaten at their own game. Here’s a list of some of the assorted antennas I’ve used in the past.

Put a ham in a college dorm with a Home-Brew QRP transmitter and receiver 40 years ago. Antennas are totally outlawed. Not for long, ever considered loading up a chain link fence? I did it, and I have witnesses. Strung a chunk of RG58 out the window and about 15 feet away was a 10’ high chain link fence surrounding the A/C system for the dorm. Connected the center feed of the RG58 at the top of the fence with a .005mF 1kV ceramic disc and it was off to the DX party. You may also need an antenna tuner but mine worked without a tuner. I also got caught and had to take it down after 6 months.

Frustrated, How about a simple Random Length Vertical. I made a pouch of sand and gravel, tied it up with some twine. To the other end of the twine I added about 30 feet of #28 enameled wire. Pitched the pouch up just over the edge of the roof 2 stories up from my room.

Feed it with 300 ohm twin lead with one side tied to the wire going up to the roof with the other side of the twin lead connected to an 18” piece of scrap re-bar driven into the ground with a small hose clamp. They never did find that one.

Got gutters on your house? Ever thought about using them as an antenna? Why not? For the most part they are metal and metal will radiate RF. This one can be real hard to find. The feed point could be the bottom end of a down spout, with a short ground rod. Ta Da... Antenna! You may want to add a few pop-rivets at the joints to help with the electrical connections.

To carry the gutter thing a bit farther if you have gutters on opposite sides of the house take some 12awg stranded wire and run it from the end of one gutter to the closest end of the other. Now you have a large “U” or the start of a horizontal loop. To finish it run a piece of the same 12awg across the other end, cut in the middle and attach you feed line. Be it coaxial line or twin lead, you end up with a random loop NVIS antenna that’s 8’ to 16’ off the ground... Not very good for DX but good for short haul QSO’s.

There are also the old Halo antenna designs that can be adapted. The J-Pole can be made of 300ohm twin lead for 6, 2 & 70cm and hung on an inside wall. So go forth and think outside the box. An antenna does not have to look like an antenna. All it has to do is radiate and receive RF and that is it.

~SK~

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