



## TV Stations Put Public Interest First After Antenna Fire on Mt. Mansfield

The afternoon of Tuesday, November 19, 2019, the WCAX-TV and WPTZ-TV antenna on the tower at the top of Mt. Mansfield caught fire and the damage resulted in WCAX and WPTZ losing the ability to transmit their broadcast signals.

Despite the two are direct competitors, local teams from CBS affiliate WCAX and NBC affiliate WPTZ, as well as their national parent companies, Gray Media and Hearst Television respectively, immediately started working together with the shared objective of getting a temporary antenna operational so they could get back on the air.

Tower crews from GTI and RF engineers from Dielectric were at the tower site within a day to assess the damage. But sub zero wind chills and inches of rime ice buildup on the structures put these two competing stations into a position where they had to ask for help from their other competitors, Fox affiliate WFFF-TV and ABC affiliate WVNY-TV.

Fully knowing the competitive advantage this would have afforded them, WFFF-TV and WVNY-TV, as well as their national parent company Nexstar Media, chose to put the public interest first. They immediately allowed WCAX and WPTZ to use WFFF and WVNY's tower, also located on Mt. Mansfield, to set up a temporary antenna.

Despite the Thanksgiving holiday and extreme weather, the team mobilized, installed the replacement antenna and got both WCAX and WPTZ back on the air by Sunday, December 1st at 1:00pm, just in time for the snowstorm that pushed across the southern half of Vermont that night. [Read the full story here](#)

### Tough Conditions

Rime ice buildup which would grow and melt away over about two-thirds of the days on site. Overnight 6+ inches of ice would collect on the structures.





November 19th antenna fire on WCAX tower on Mt. Mansfield



Extent of the fire damage cannot be inspected for months



WFFF tower with the temporary antenna mounted, while the fix was being built

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LBS Broadcast Expert

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