

Keeping it simple.
Making it easy.

A how-to resource for WISPs



Planning for commercial tower site selection.

If you're a WISP who is just getting started or you haven't collocated on a tower before, it's important to know the ins and outs of a completely new process.

1. Think about the area you need to cover.

Evaluate geography for line of site and available assets in order to best serve your customers.

2. Get specific.

Provide latitudes and longitudes or a specific search ring radius of where you want to be so we can include all viable assets.

EXPERT TIP

Our proprietary site selection tool, CCI sites, can help identify all assets in a targeted area. CCI sites gives you the critical information you need including site location photos, maps, CAD drawings, and other documentation.

3. You need to determine your preferred RAD center.

Once we determine available RADs, you or an RF engineer will need to test and validate.

4. Consider the services you need to get on air.

Do you need a full turnkey solution? Or do you need a specific service, like drawings, zoning and permitting, or possibly construction?

5. Don't forget to evaluate risk.

Some sites may have additional risk due to structural integrity, consent, or a more difficult jurisdiction.

EXPERT TIP

We can help you identify these risks and select the sites that get you on air faster.

6. Understand the fees.

It's important to remember that it's more than just the cost associated with your services. Watch out for structural analysis, CAD drawings, jurisdictional requirements, and the review process.

7. Review jurisdictional requirements with a local expert.

You'll avoid delays if you have someone who knows the jurisdiction and is familiar with its requirements to ensure a streamlined and efficient process.

EXPERT TIP

Since we operate in nearly 1,000 jurisdictions, we can help you navigate jurisdictional requirements.

8. Not all installations require zoning and permitting.

Many collocations don't require it, which means you can get on air faster.

9. There can be many variables throughout the process.

Some to consider: Does your site have fiber or power? Will you need to provide hand drawings vs. large format drawings? Who will pick up the building permit?

EXPERT TIP

You need a licensed contractor to physically pick-up building permits.

10. Get ready to submit your application.

We have a simplified process for WISPs to get on air. Ask one of our Market Sales Managers to share our **10 Steps to Get You on Air** infographic.

Strategically maneuvering regulatory hurdles.

1. Understand how to collocate your antennas and equipment without triggering SHPO, tribal, NEPA, and FAA review.

FCC regulations favor collocation on existing structures by removing requirements to consult State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) and tribes. To leverage these regulations:

- › Avoid increasing tower heights. A 1' increase could trigger FAA review; a 10% increase could trigger SHPO and tribal review.
- › Elevate ground equipment 1' above base ground elevation in 100-year floodplains.
- › Avoid compound expansions when possible. If a compound must be expanded, avoid excavation in the expansion area.
- › Avoid collocations on buildings designated as national landmarks.
- › Avoid collocations on buildings more than 45 years old unless you'll be installed close to existing equipment or qualified as a small cell.
- › Avoid collocations on rooftops within historic districts if possible.

2. Take advantage of the small cell regulatory scheme.

If your antenna is 3 cubic feet or less and your equipment is 17 cubic feet or less, you could take advantage of the FCC's small cell regulatory rules (especially on rooftops and other non-tower structures).

- › If you must collocate in a historic district, determine whether your equipment will qualify as a small cell.
- › If equipment is a small cell, select rooftops that have no other antennas or radio equipment visible from ground level.
- › Use camouflage techniques to install the antennas and equipment.

3. Transmit frequencies that are pre-approved by the FAA.

The FAA requires notice of any proposed structure that is greater than 200' or will be constructed in proximity to a flight path. Many towers have received "Determinations of No Hazard to Air Navigation." Most Determinations require that all frequencies transmitted from the tower have FAA review. To avoid delays in construction, allow 60 days for FAA approval in advance of construction.

4. Plan collocations around protected bird nesting seasons.

Certain protected birds have found tall towers to be attractive nesting places.

- › Ask if a tower has a history of bird nests and plan construction when nesting season is over.

EXPERT TIP

Collocating on one of our towers? We can provide you with state-specific information on protected birds and their nesting seasons.

Complying with non-standard market insurance requirements.

There's been an industry trend to narrow the coverage provided by the standard Commercial General Liability policy. More and more underwriters are creating new exclusions which can cause you to be out of compliance.

These exclusions are even more critical with a non-standard insurance carrier because they can eliminate or limit your coverage. So, it's never been more important to have a good insurance broker or agent with a depth of commercial business expertise that can guide and advise you.

Conversation starters with your agent.

- Is my insurance carrier standard or non-standard (excess or surplus lines)?
- If non-standard, can you review my policy to determine exclusions added that would limit my insurance coverage?

Things to watch out for:

1. A modification to the standard employer's liability.
2. An exclusion that invalidates coverage if your contractor or subcontractor's insurance doesn't meet certain requirements.
3. Policy limitation(s) if your contractor or subcontractor's insurance doesn't meet certain requirements.
4. An exclusion if work is performed above a stated height.
5. An exclusion if your work or operations cause a wildfire.
6. An exclusion for property damage or bodily injury arising from excavation or underground work or operations.
7. An insured vs. insured exclusion if one insured makes a claim against another insured.

EXPERT TIP

This becomes problematic when an additional insured makes a claim against a named insured.

8. An exclusion for damage or injury that arises from the use of a boom truck or crane.
9. An exclusion for damage or injury that arises from work performed prior to the current policy inception date.
10. An exclusion related to real property in your care, custody, or control or liability for property you work upon.

Leveraging best practices for your tower contract.

1. Get an attorney who's familiar with the industry.

They can evaluate a contract with your specific needs in mind and make sure you are protected.

2. Pay close attention to the ground lease.

Because the tower company might not own the land under a site, an underlying ground lease between the tower company and the landowner may exist. Keep an eye out for obligations like access requirements and fees in the lease.

3. Contracts are essential.

- It proves you have the right to install your equipment at a site.
- It shows where your equipment is allowed, including what kind and how much.
- It states your rent, how often it will escalate and by how much, and the length of your term.
- What else to look out for in your contract:
 - What happens if you experience interference or if you cause it.
 - Termination rights like who can terminate and when.
 - Are there site access requirements like when you're allowed on site and a number you must call?
 - Equipment removal including obligations, cost, and timing.
 - Contract language around hazardous chemicals and RF exposure.

4. Verify your insurance meets contract requirements.

5. You can't assume the tower company will provide power—you may have to get your own meter.

EXPERT TIP

Ask for power information early in the process and think about what you'll do if the power goes out at your site.

6. Don't forget about fees and other costs.

This includes one-time fees, recurring rents, and reimbursements.

7. Be diligent when assigning or taking assignment of a contract.

Buying or selling just the equipment is not enough. You also need to make sure the interest in the contract is transferred. If you acquire equipment but not the contract, you could be considered a trespasser.

8. Understand all pre-installation requirements.

9. Choose an experienced contractor.

The tower company will probably have requirements for who can work on the site.

EXPERT TIP

We can identify approved contractors for you. Always be aware of their schedule. Will they be ready when you are?

10. Contracts set expectations, provide assurances, and protect you in a dispute.

