

# Empire State Building Climbers Force NYC FM and TV Stations to Backup Sites

Following protocols, the broadcasters shifted to auxiliary setups for about an hour

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Two people got to the top of the Empire State Building's antenna, unfurled a banner and were arrested when they descended. Credit: Michael Nagle/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Two unauthorized climbers who scaled to the top of the spire above the Empire State Building caused the New York City FM and TV stations that broadcast from antennas there to shift to auxiliary sites for about an hour Wednesday.

The shift followed building protocols as soon as the daredevils were reported, heavily driven by the extreme RF present on the live tower, two people familiar with the inner workings of the broadcast configuration at Empire told Radio World.

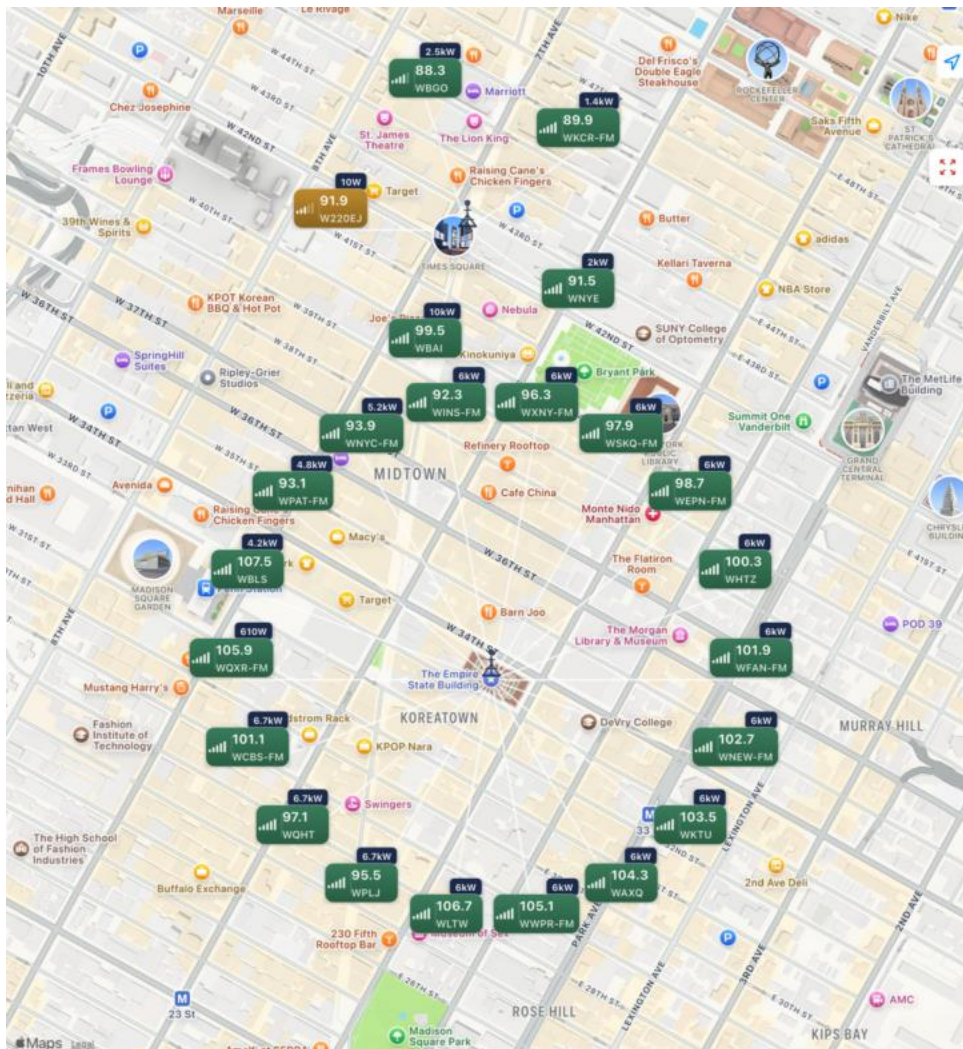
Many NYC FMs maintain backup antennas atop the Conde Nast Building at 4 Times Square.

The couple, [identified by multiple reports as Angela Nikolau, 33, and Ivan Beerkus, 32](#), were seen holding a pro-peace banner atop the spire, 1,454 feet above the ground.

Radio and TV occupants returned to normal operations once the pair was off the spire.

Footage that [multiple TV outlets revealed](#) showed the couple dangling from the the former top mount master antenna that, [according to Mike Fitzpatrick's NECRAT website](#), once serviced the analog signals of WNBC(TV) and WNYW(TV).

The couple had to make their way past the master antenna that 15 New York FMs call home, while three more — WPLJ(FM), WQHT(FM) and WCBS(FM) — use the “Mini” master, which they also had to scale.



The New York City FMs that transmit from the Empire State Building, [from the RadioLand app](#). WBGO, WKCR, WNYE and WBAI transmit from 4 Times Square. Click to enlarge.

They also had to pass the VHF Hi Master antenna for WABC(TV) and WPIX(TV), plus the DTV master for WFUT(TV) and WXTV(TV).

Police received 911 calls concerning the climbers around 12 p.m. on Wednesday according to reports.

The banner Nikolau and Beerkus hung read, “When the power of love beats the love of power the world knows peace.”

They were wearing masks during the ascent but were neither harnessed nor wearing any parachutes.

Visitors to the observation deck were also cleared as a safety precaution, according to reports.

After spending approximately a half-hour at the top, the couple moved onto a platform where they embraced. Beerkus dropped to one knee and proposed to Nikolau, who accepted.

About 10 minutes later, they began descending.

Police officers from the NYPD’s Emergency Services Unit climbed up the spire to meet the two and placed them into custody just before 1 p.m.

The NYPD is reviewing surveillance from the Empire State Building, [WABC\(TV\) said](#). The two appeared to access the spire from a 102nd floor hatch used for maintenance, possibly by breaking a lock, WABC said.

Nikolau and Beerkus are known for their daredevil “rooftopping” climbs around the world. They were profiled in the 2024 documentary “Skywalkers: A Love Story,” [currently available on Netflix](#).

Potential charges could include trespass and reckless endangerment, [police sources told WCBS\(TV\)](#).

*Ed. note: An earlier version of this article noted WCBS(TV) having its master antenna on the Empire State Building. That is incorrect, its master is on One World Trade Center. WCBS maintains an auxiliary at Empire.*

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