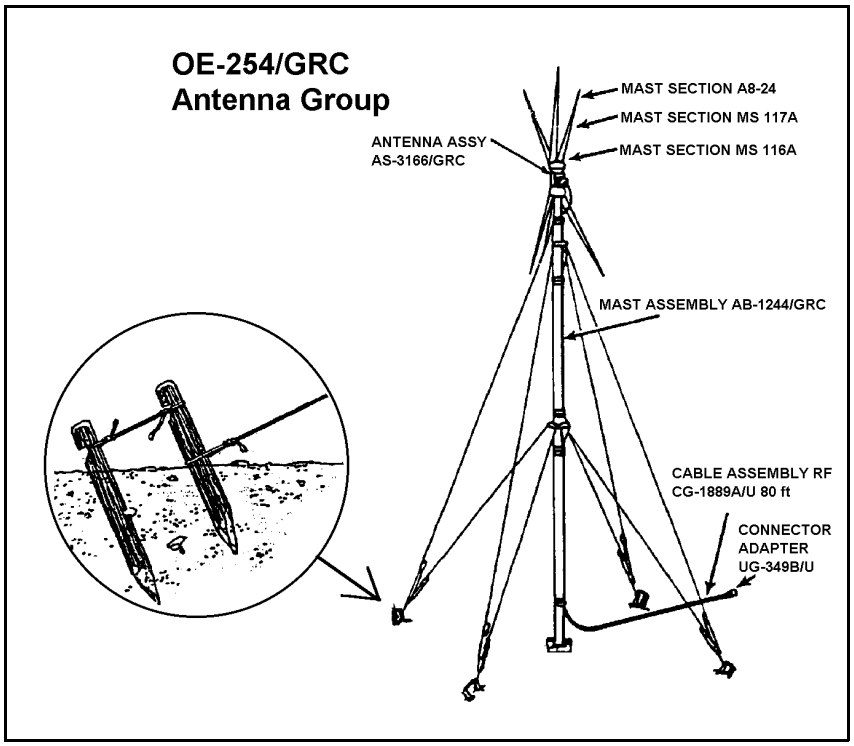
Two Stakes in Tandem Help Eliminate Danger Of Falling Antennas



By driving in two stakes and tying them in tandem, as shown in the circled portion of the illustration above, chances of a stake working loose in high winds or soft ground can be greatly reduced, writes LTC David M. Fiedler, from Fort Monmouth, N.J.

"Over the last 15 years, I have personally seen several antenna assemblies come loose and fall on personnel. These assemblies were primarily OE-254-type antennas, but I have also seen RC-292, OE-303, and other antennas commonly used by combat units do the same thing," he said. "The primary cause of the antenna assembly collapse was that they were erected in very soft ground, such as sand or loose shale, and the support stakes just couldn't hold against the forces pulling against them, even in slight winds. Tactically, the equipment operators had no choice in the location of the antennas...they were doing the best they could from the site selection point of view.

"Since the masts involved were over 30 feet high and the weight of the antenna was near the top, it doesn't take much to work the support stakes loose."

LTC Fiedler said he had used this method many times, beginning back in the Vietnam War, and most recently with the New Jersey National Guard at Fort Dix, N.J. The method has proved 100-percent successful, he said, in eliminating a problem that has injured many soldiers and resulted in the loss of much expensive equipment.