

Hot Tips

Good info for the new ham, and old stuff to refresh your memory



Add ham radio to your will

After all these many years, you've no doubt acquired quite the collection of amateur radio gear, most of it still very useful. But, some day you'll be faced with your own mortality, and somebody else will need to do something with all that equipment. If you specify in your will what you'd like done with it, that takes the guesswork out of it. But wait...you **do** have a will, don't you?

A **will** is a legal document that informs the living of your intentions for your estate once you die. Your **estate** is everything you own or have control over, such as your money accounts, property, house, corporate ownership, guardianship, and yes, ham radio gear. It's possible for you to pass away at any time, and without a will, all your belongings can be claimed by people through no choice of your own, or by the state, or even discarded to the local landfill. But that's not the biggest problem solved by a will.

When you leave this mortal life, whom do you expect to pick up the burden of removing all your ham radio equipment? Your spouse? Your local ham radio club? A couple of close friends? Nobody? Whomever they are, they'll need to make some decisions, such as whether to donate the gear or sell it, to clean it or distribute it as-is, to give it away or throw it in the trash. And if they do decide to sell it, will your spouse or relatives know how much they should expect from the sales?

Here are a few things you can do, to prepare for that inevitable day:

- Make a will (**surprisingly easy**), and include a section that instructs survivors how to deal with your ham radio equipment
- List in that section the equipment you consider of worth, and how much (in USD *today*) you believe they're worth if you anticipate them being sold



- List which items can be donated, indicating that the items not listed can be trashed (as valuable as you think your DIY equipment is, most people will not want to inherit much of what you've made)
- Indicate who should take care of distributing your equipment (this can be a very heavy burden for your spouse, by the way), or allow the Executor to assign somebody
- Label your equipment, whether it's of worth or not (including the mods made to them), so that it's clear what should be its destination following your demise
- Investigate, then note in the will, how much it's going to cost, to take down your tower or antenna structure (including a contractor to rent a crane or bucket)
- Notarize the will, and inform significant others of the document, and of this section
- Finally, if you believe that you'll soon leave this frail existence, prepare in advance by getting rid of as much ham radio equipment as you can live without, even in stages, until the big day

If you're ready to start selling off some of your equipment now, you can list them on the [Schulman Auction Group](#), who specializes in selling ham radio gear for you, or a [yard sale Facebook group](#). If you want to specify a recipient of your donations, your local ham radio club or school might make a good choice.

Just remember that doing nothing is simply not likely to end up well; be considerate enough to manage this final matter.