

LARC Hamlet Net – 2/12/2019

What was the web site that talks about mobile radio installation?

<http://www.k0bg.com/> (Click on the green buttons on the left to access different sections – “ABC’s” is a good starting point - <http://www.k0bg.com/abcs.html>)

My ham radio shuts off when I start my car – should I manually turn it off before I turn the key?

First off, if you are not connected directly to the battery (i.e. you’re using the cigarette lighter or some other power connection through the fuse panel), then your car may be cutting off the power prior to engaging the starter.

If you’ve wired directly to the battery (as is suggested, see <http://www.k0bg.com/wiring.html>), then the voltage being supplied to your radio may be dropping below that required to keep the radio powered on. <https://www.popularmechanics.com/cars/how-to/a2074/4221215/> claims that during starting, the voltage drops to 9-10 volts.

The Kenwood TM-D710 manual specifies the power requirements as “13.8V +/-15%”. 85% of 13.8V is 11.73 volts, so it would make sense that a radio would turn off during engine start. I didn’t see anything in the Kenwood manual stating whether you should turn the radio off when starting your vehicle (I checked the manual for a Yaesu FT-857 and didn’t see this directly addresses either, so I assume it’s not a problem).

The KØBG site (<http://www.k0bg.com/wiring.html#relays>) talks about adding an ignition-controlled relay to your radio’s power line. It recommends against it, specifically stating that the car’s battery should protect your radio from ignition transients (which was the only concern I had about leaving the radio on).

This site, https://www.eetimes.com/author.asp?section_id=36&doc_id=1326905, also talks about power monitoring systems in new vehicles. One thing I’d forgotten about is that some new cars will turn off the engine when you come to a stop (and then automatically start it when you hit the gas). This sort of setup would make operating a mobile radio in traffic a frustrating experience (although if there’s that much traffic, perhaps you shouldn’t be on the radio!)

Note that your mobile radio may also have an “auto power-off” functionality that will turn itself off if the radio is unused