



Mike Valerio, right, helps Anthony Jones with his harness.

There is a spectacular view and plenty of blue sky when a Local 1245 telecom crew arrives on the roof of PG&E headquarters at 77 Beale in downtown San Francisco.

But these telecom specialists didn't come up for the view. They came to install a new antenna for Cornerstone—the PG&E program launched in 2010 to increase grid flexibility, mitigate outages and improve system reliability.

“This is one of the sites where we're going to put a radio. It collects all this data and it's all used for control and monitoring of the electric grid,” says Eric Burk, a Telecom Foreman and 22-year IBEW member. In short, it's part of the communications technology that helps PG&E understand what's happening in its system at any given time.

But that radio, located downstairs, won't be listening or talking to anybody without an antenna. Working with Burk on the roof-top installation are Comm Techs Mike Valerio, a 15-year IBEW member; Issac Taylor, 9 years; and Anthony Jones, 3 years.

The installation, performed on March 2, is relatively straight-forward, taking only a few hours. The job is made easier by the fact that there is already some existing coax cable coming up to the tower.

In this line of work you can't take any task for granted, especially when there's climbing involved. The crew starts the job with a tailboard where they review the tasks to be performed, and also the



Anthony Jones and Mike Valerio preparing to install the new antenna.



Eric Burk, left, and Mike Valerio check out where the antenna is to be installed.

emergency procedures that would be followed in the event something goes wrong.

Besides antennae and other telecommunications equipment, the Cornerstone project will bring improvements to power transformers, overhead and underground conductors and switches, line reclosers, line cutouts and fuses, and circuit breakers—part of the PG&E's overall effort to protect system reliability into the future.



Eric Burk, left, and Issac Taylor.



Mike Valerio



Anthony Jones and Mike Valerio.





Issac Taylor

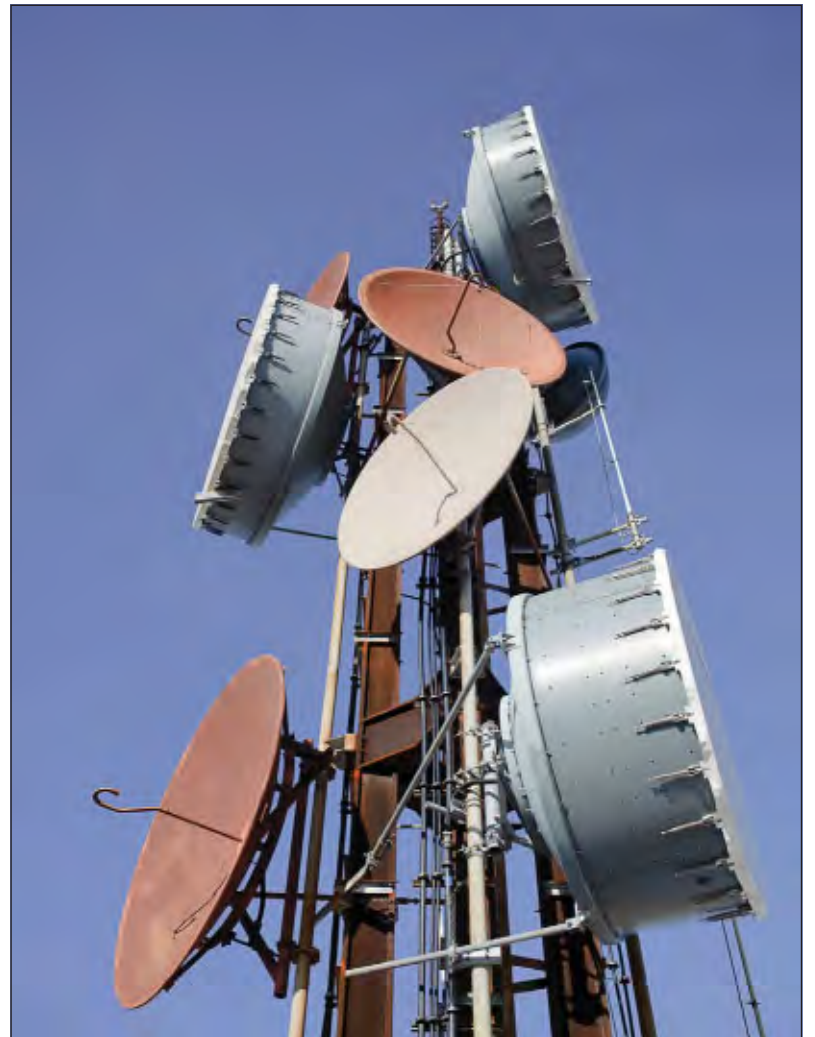


Anthony Jones works on the antenna installation.



Anthony Jones and Mike Valerio.

Photos by Michelle Frankfurter



Communications equipment on top of 77 Beale permits PG&E to gather information from around its system.



Atop 77 Beale Street in San Francisco, with the Bay Bridge in the background are, from left: Mike Valerio, Anthony Jones, Eric Burk and Issac Taylor.