

# Airwaves dispute leads to FCC filing

**KATY-FM RADIO:** The Inland station with a transmission tower in Idyllwild says an LA station infringes on its signal.

BY KIMBERLY PIERCEALL  
THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

An Inland radio station that broadcasts adult contemporary music over an area from Riverside to Temecula claims a Los Angeles station has interrupted its signal since 2007 and has petitioned the FCC to help clear the airwaves.

Much like recent changes in television broadcasting, radio stations have been adding HD digital signals to their systems.

KATY-FM, which operates as 101.3 on Inland radio dials and has a tower in Idyllwild, contends that the digital signals broadcast by one nearby station that also has an Idyllwild tower has interfered with its own transmissions.

KATY filed a petition last month with the federal agency claiming that the HD digital signal being used by KRTH-FM, a CBS Radio Inc. station in Los Angeles also known as K-EARTH 101, had interrupted its broadcasts in places such as Riverside and Moreno Valley.

KRTH-FM had been grandfathered as a "super-powered" station. Bill McNulty, vice president and general manager of KATY, said that's allowed KRTH's digital signal to be 10 times stronger than

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CONTINUED FROM D1

non-grandfathered stations.

In January, the FCC passed a rule that could allow stations to increase their level of digital broadcasts to 10 percent of its analog power rather than 1 percent. KRTH hasn't increased its digital power from 1 percent since the rule was changed.

Karen Mateo, a spokeswoman with CBS Radio, said the company would be filing its response to the lengthy FCC petition shortly.

McNulty said his company had approached CBS to change the direction of its signal. But without a resolution KATY felt compelled to seek the FCC's help.

McNulty isn't sure how many listeners his station may have lost as a result.

"That's a very hard thing to gauge," he said. "No one calls the station and says I don't get you anymore. They simply go to another channel."

He estimated that the interference has affected 20 percent of the station's signal, which could be commensurate with a 20 percent loss in revenue.

An FCC spokeswoman wouldn't discuss the merits of the petition.

Reach Kimberly Pierceall at 951-368-9552 or kpierceall@PE.com

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