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## Mobs of romantic moths disrupt radio broadcasts

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# NEW MEXICO

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## Mobs of Romantic Moths Disrupt Radio Broadcasts

By D.J. Swanson

JOURNAL CORRESPONDENT

ROSWELL — Engineers at the new public radio transmitter site near here have been having problems getting the bugs out of their broadcast equipment — literally.

Public radio station KMTH-FM has been on the air since Feb. 14, but in recent weeks the 100,000-watt transmitter has been repeatedly knocked off the air in the evening hours.

It seems thousands of miller moths are in the midst of mating season, and the transmitter has become the biggest singles bar in all of eastern New Mexico's mothdom.

According to engineers at the site, 60 miles southeast of Roswell, the moths are apparently attracted to the transmitter's voltage and have been finding their way past numerous

screens and filters to fly inside the equipment.

Once inside, the buildup of moths causes the high voltage section of the transmitter to overload, shutting off the equipment.

The transmitter has been thrown off the air nearly every night between 10 and 11 p.m. for more than a week, apparently the moths' favorite time for meeting and mating.

Meanwhile, KMTH engineers have had to drive 250 miles round trip each morning from broadcast headquarters at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales to reset the transmitter.

Electronic bugkillers and "bug bombs" have been tried without success. But according to broadcast director Duane Ryan, engineers were at the transmitter site again Monday, and came up with a time-honored solution: Mothballs.