

NATURAL INTERFERENCE

We all know that sunspots and magnetic storms from space can mess with GPS, but did you know your magnetometers are sensitive enough to get twisted, too? Imagine losing GPS about the same time as your heading indications start wandering and, oh yeah, you are IFR. Not a pretty picture, is it? Kind of wish you had that ground-based navigation back, something simple like a VOR, eh? I've seen aircraft that have no ground-based navigation receivers at all that are called IFR-equipped. I'm not sure I agree.

Static wicks are also a good idea if you are operating an aircraft with magnetometers. On hot, humid, cloudy days, the static electricity generated by the aircraft sliding through the air and water molecules builds up quickly, and can create electrical magnetism that confuses the boxes, too.

