

Something For Everyone  
(Renew Your Ticket On Line)

By  
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I cannot think of any article or column that I have contributed to that has equal value to everyone regardless of his or her personal interests. So whether you chase DX, mobile op, tinker in the garage, rag chew, or just watch TV, this is it.

If you have a ham ticket, every ten years you will want to renew your license. If you haven't had any license actions in the past eight or nine years such as upgrading, change of address, or new call sign, chances are the current process is different from what you remember. Forget about forms. You don't even need a pen or pencil. It's so simple, even a caveman can do it.

As trustee for the East Tennessee DX Association club call, NJ4I, I just did an online renewal. The government even took my credit card for the \$20.80 vanity call fee. In a business day and a half, I could see that the renewal was processed. The paper license arrived in the mail exactly one week later.

You can view your license data at <http://wireless.fcc.gov>. Follow one of the amateur links and enter your call. Look at your data to see if you have a FRN (FCC Registration Number.) If you haven't come out of your cave since the old FCC Form 610 days to do one of those license actions, you may not have a FRN. If you don't, you will have to get one. If you don't want one, too bad! Even if you file on paper or through a VEC, the FCC will insist on assigning a FRN and password before processing the renewal. That could take a few weeks by snail mail. If you already have a FRN, great! Even so, it is a good idea to check on your personal information that the FCC has in its database. In typical government fashion, the FCC stores it in a different system from the license information. So whether you need a FRN or already have one, follow the next step.

Follow a link to CORES if you can find one or go to <http://www.fcc.gov>. You can find a link there. CORES stands for COMmission REGistration System. Once in the system, you can get a FRN and tie it to your call sign (required) or fix any erroneous data that may be there. In my case, CORES had an old address and phone number even though my license data was up to date. For a new CORES registration, the FCC may send an initial password by postal mail. Even so, it should only take a week.

With your FRN in hand, now you can go back to the Wireless Branch (<http://wireless.fcc.gov>) and click on amateur and look for a link for renewal. As you go through the steps, a typical website credit card page will come up if you chose to pay the vanity fee with plastic. If you really are a caveman and chose to pay by check, you will have to print a form to mail. Kind of defeats the value of doing it on line. Either way, your name and address data will be pre-filled with the data from CORES. If you use a credit card (recommended,) the Treasury Dept. will even send you a receipt by email. Sounds complicated, but it really isn't bad and the process sure is fast. In any case, renewing online is painless and sure it beats paying a VEC to do it and going to the Post Office.