

The EMF Meter: The Best Damn Paranormal Investigation Tool, Period

By

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I am sure that most of you who are avid sports fans, like me, will recognize my play on the title of the sports show of a similar name. I thought it was an appropriate title for such an important piece of equipment. Being a lifelong Star Trek fan as I am, I have always thought it was cool watching the paranormal shows and their use of the EMF meter. On Star Trek, every time they would beam down and explore a new alien world, they would whip out their tricorder and start using it to find signs of life forms, minerals, energy, etc. You name it and the tricorder could find it, pin point its location and tell you everything you want to know about the subject matter. Paranormal investigators on these shows use the EMF meter much the same way to find and pin point ghosts. Every time they detect an EMF spike, they know there is a ghost present. It is totally awesome that we have such a brilliant piece of technology that can detect ghosts, isn't it? Not so fast.

There is no study anywhere that definitively correlates EMF spikes to "spirit activity". Yes, it is a possibility according to several theories, but it still remains *just*

a possibility. We still don't have a definitive answer on what "spirit activity" actually is, so how can we hope to detect it with any degree of certainty? I still stand by my claim made in the title of this article. Let me explain why.

A few months ago I was on an investigation at a private residence. The reports of activity in the home were centered on about a 10 foot section of the hallway. The claims the homeowners made were things like seeing a man in the hallway, feelings of being watched and just plain feelings of uneasiness. We went in, ran our baselines and set up equipment. Looking down the hallway there was a bathroom on the left and two bedroom doors on the right. The first door on the right was directly across from the bathroom door and the second was about 4-5 feet further down the hallway. At the end of the hall was the master bedroom and upon entering the master bedroom, there was a master bathroom to the left. The 10 foot section of this hallway where the claims were centered started at the bathroom door and ran down to the master bedroom. At one point we ran an EMF sweep of the hallway and got quite a surprise. As we moved up the wall, about 5 feet off the floor, the EMF meter went off the scale. We were getting a constant reading of 130-140 mG (milligauss). This excessively high reading continued at the same height all the way to the master bedroom door. Upon investigating, we discovered that the plug in and light switch for the hall bathroom were roughly the same height off the floor as the EMF readings. We turned the light switch off and on in the bathroom and plugged things in to the outlet but this had no affect on our readings. It wasn't until one of our

investigators inadvertently turned off the light in the master bathroom when the EMF reading dropped to zero. This one wire in the wall, which ran back to the master bathroom, was the probable cause for all the paranormal activity this family had been experiencing. So what does a bad wire emitting high EMF readings have to do with paranormal activity? Quite a lot.

An electromagnetic field is a physical field produced by electrically charged objects. It affects the behavior of charged objects in the vicinity of the field. A Gauss is a common unit of measurement of magnetic field strength. A Gauss meter, or EMF meter, is an instrument which measures the strength of magnetic fields. Inside a Gauss meter there is a coil of thin wire, typically with hundreds of turns. As a magnetic field radiates through the coil, it induces a current, which is amplified by the circuitry inside the Gauss meter.

Gauss meters may vary in the strength of the magnetic field they are capable of measuring. A meter used for measuring EMFs from power lines, transformers, substations and appliances around the home, for example, should be able to measure as low as .1 mg.

Gauss meters vary widely in price and accuracy. Meters have either a single axis coil or a triple axis coil. Single axis meters are much simpler than triple axis meters to manufacture and thus, are less expensive.

To use a single axis meter you must point the meter's one sensor in three directions -- the x, y and z axis. Then, you combine the three readings in a mathematical equation to calculate the combined field strength. Obviously, it's far easier and more accurate to use a 3-axis meter. Triple axis Gauss meters are quite accurate, but they are also more expensive.

Another thing to watch out for when purchasing or renting a Gauss meter is whether or not it is frequency weighted. Most meters will read the same EMF strength no matter what the frequency.

As the human body appears to be sensitive to both the field strength AND the frequency, Gauss meters used for biological purposes should be "frequency weighted".

This means that if the field is different than 60 Hz the meter will consider the frequency and use it in calculating and displaying the EMF's strength. This feature is why frequency weighted meters will show a higher EMF reading than those meters typically used by electricians and engineers. The sensitivity of the human body to EMF fields is where the "paranormal" factor lies.

There are several debates in the medical community regarding the long term health affects of exposure to electromagnetic fields. There are several studies being done as to whether prolonged exposure can cause different diseases from cancer and heart problems to leukemia and thyroid disorders. One thing we are

certain of now is the short term effects. The symptoms of short term exposure to high electromagnetic fields can vary from person to person based on their individual physiology. The symptoms include but are not limited to hallucinations, headaches, fatigue, nausea and feelings of paranoia and uneasiness. Many people explain these two latter symptoms as a feeling like "they are being watched". I believe a couple of these symptoms were mentioned in the claims of activity at the private residence investigation mentioned earlier:

Hallucinations-the man in the hallway and feelings of being watched or uneasiness. Is this the definitive conclusion to this family's claim of activity? No, but it is the most probable.

There's a heated debate as to what electromagnetic field (EMF) level is considered safe. Since the experts have not come to a consensus, you'll have to decide for yourself... Many government and utility documents report the usual ambient level of 60-Hz magnetic field to be 0.5 mG.

Thus, any reading higher than 0.5 mG is above the "usual" ambient exposure. Many experts and public officials, as well as the few governments that have made an effort to offer public protection, have adopted the 3 mG cutoff point. The EPA has proposed a safety standard of 1 mG. Sweden has set a maximum safety limit of 1 mG. Whether you subscribe to the 0.5 mG level or the 3 mG level, one thing is certain. The 130-140 mG level this family was experiencing in their hallway was at least 45 times the maximum safe level.

Paranormal research must always start with the most reasonable explanations before making the huge leap to ghosts. The EMF meter can keep us grounded in the world of the prosaic where I believe most paranormal activity has its roots. That is why I believe it is the best damn paranormal research tool period.

