

the matching decoupling section.

Construction

Add one half inch to the calculated length to allow for exposing the center conductor so it can be connected to the other element. See Fig. 2. Cut the jacket, shield, and dielectric with one cut. A sharp knife or X-acto® miter saw should be used to make the cut. After all the elements are cut to length, then cut the jacket back three-eighths of an inch and tin both the center conductor and shield using a 25-Watt iron—too much heat will melt the dielectric.

Now that all parts are tinned, solder the parts together with a maximum of one-eighth-inch separation between elements. After completion, check for shorts by visual inspection as the antenna is at dc ground. Excess flux should be scraped off, but do not use any chemical flux remover as it can contaminate the dielectric. The whip on the top is connected to both the center and shield. The matching section is a quarter-wave coax stub shorted at both ends and a piston trimmer capacitor. See Fig. 3.

Tune-Up

Adjust the trimmer for minimum vswr. If the minimum is at one end of the trimmer, then adjust the spacing of the stub to feedline distance. One-eighth inch is normal for the spacing.

Housing

The antenna is housed in PVC pipe. The heavy wall is the one to use and it is also known as schedule 40 PVC. One-inch diameter can be used for either the 1241-MHz model or the 434 model, but if the antenna is to be mounted as a free-standing antenna, the 434-MHz housing should be tapered. This can be done with 3/4-

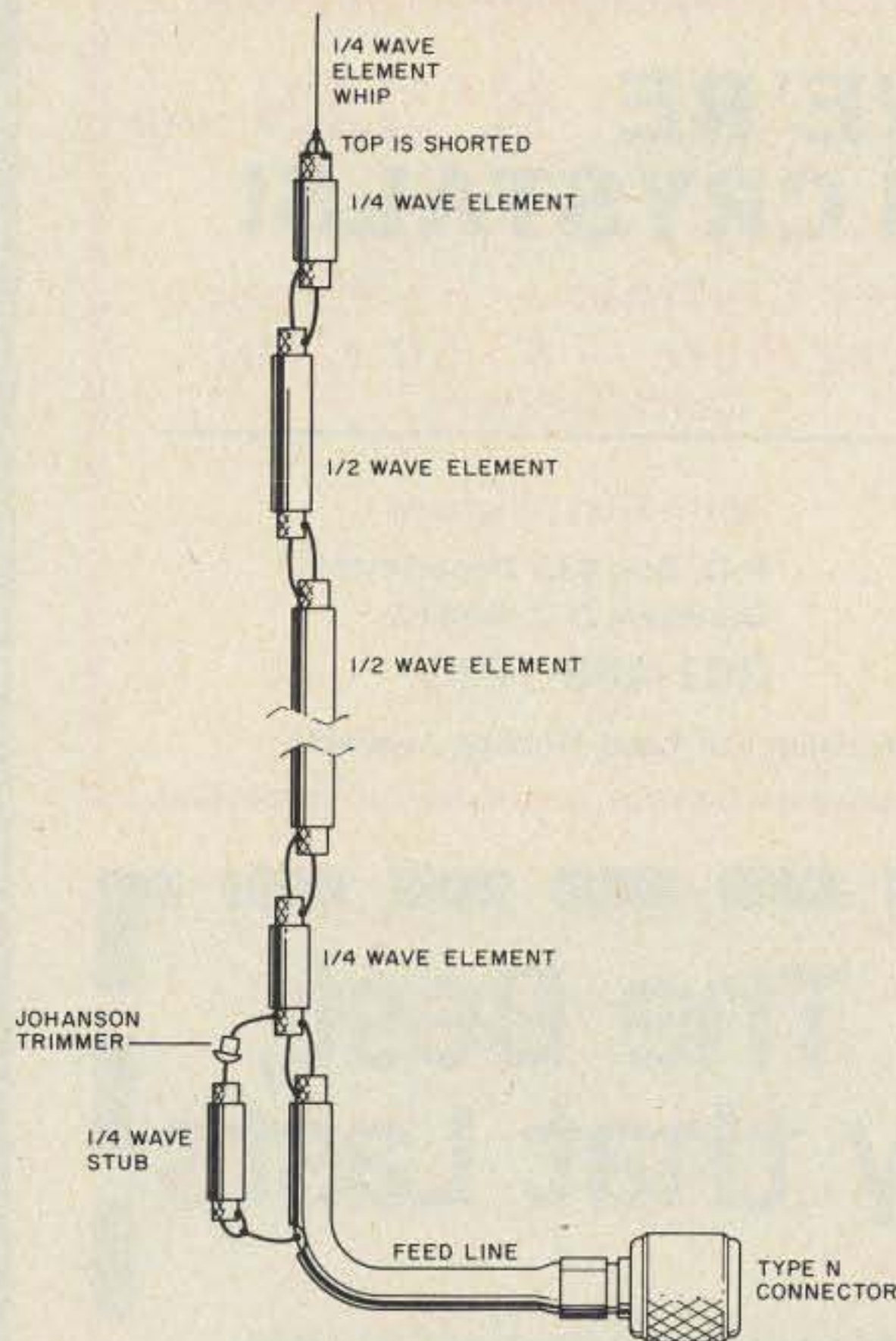


Fig. 3. 8 elements = 6 dB. 16 elements = 9 dB.

inch, 1-inch, and 1 1/4-inch pipe. The pipe may need to be heated to make a better fit. Pipe caps are used to keep the rain out of the housing and the bottom should be open so it can breathe. The antenna can be mounted one half wavelength from a mast for a cardioid pattern and the gain will increase 2 dB over that of an omnidirectional pattern. See Fig. 4 for the patterns.

Conclusions

Construction time is one to two evenings. Take your time and you will have a better working antenna. The 434-MHz version has been in use for one year now on Mount Wilson and has survived all four seasons from 100 degrees heat to snow and ice. Many of these particular antennas in Los Angeles and San Diego have been built and used with the same results as I have obtained. Recently, a second 1241-MHz version was installed on Mount Wilson for the aural transmitter on the ATV repeater. It is

identical to the one used for the visual transmitter

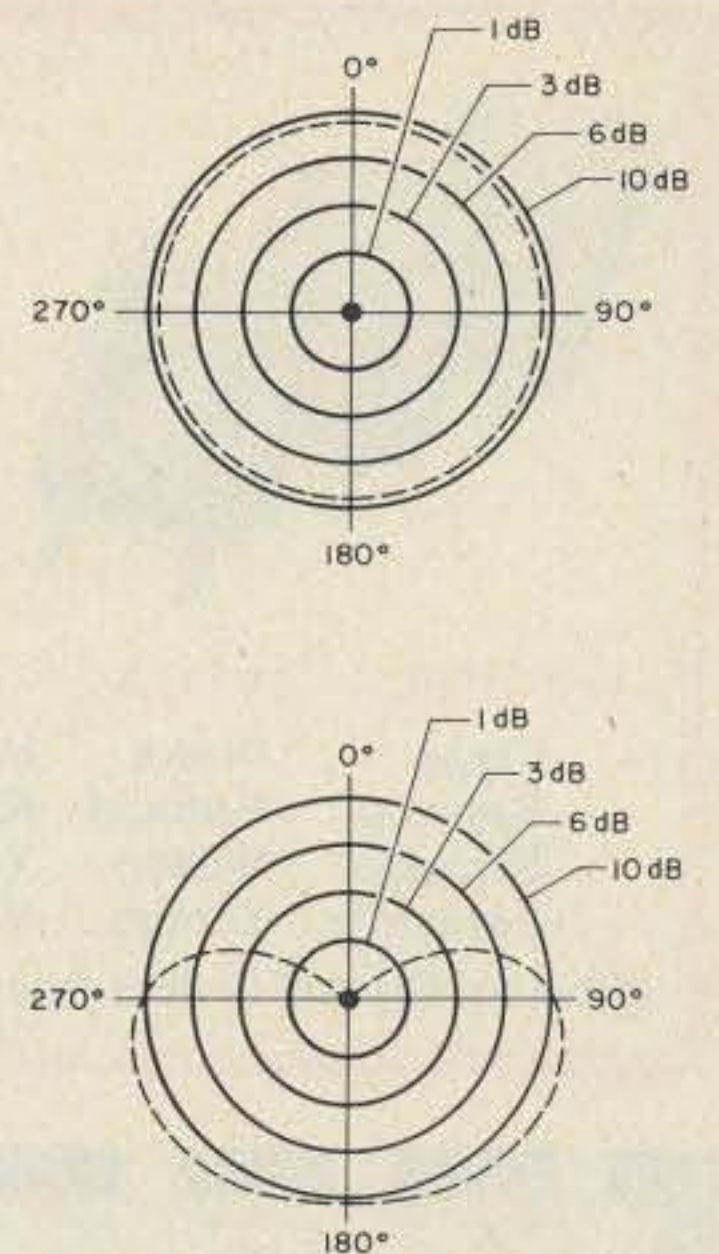


Fig. 4. (a) Omnidirectional pattern. (b) Cardioid pattern.

and the results have been good.

Acknowledgements

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