

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO THOSE CONCERNED ABOUT CELL PHONE HEALTH HAZARDS

As the health hazards from cell phone usage have become known, the New Denver Village Mayor and Council requested that Telus place their transmitter at least 500 metres outside the Village limits. Meanwhile, those opposing any cell phone transmitter installation are the New Denver Chamber of Commerce, the Slocan Valley Economic Development Commission, the

Healthy Housing Society, the Valhalla Committee and a petition signed by a majority of village residents. Nevertheless, Telus and CBC continue to insist they will go ahead with the installation, while the Telus representative, Shawn Hall, has repeatedly stated in various media that Telus has a huge demand for cell phone service in New Denver — a claim unsupported by the evidence.

REASONS FOR NEW DENVER OPPOSITION

On what is this opposition based? Firstly on health hazards, secondly on the economic benefits of keeping New Denver as a cell-phone-free tourist destination. The subject of the health hazards is a complex one. On September 16th the Valhalla Committee for Environmental Health, a subgroup of the Valhalla Wilderness Society chaired by Richard Caniell, submitted a 611-page scientific report about cell phone hazards to the New Denver Mayor and Council. The BioInitiative Report published in September 2007 by the University of Albany, New York brings together extensive findings by medical doctors and research scientists from the US, Sweden, Denmark, Austria, China and the UK. The report corroborates the concern about health hazards expressed by a majority of villagers regarding the Telus cell phone transmitter installation at the edge of Centennial Park, and the use of cell phones in town.

The report states, in connection with wireless de-

vices (cell phones), "there is enough evidence of increased risk of brain tumours to warrant intervention with respect to their use . . . good public health policy requires preventative action." An important section in the report sets forth substantive evidence that transmitter radiation is particularly harmful to children and teenagers. The result especially noted by research in other countries is childhood leukemia.

In a letter, the Valhalla Committee pointed out to the Village administration that the proposed cell phone transmitter on the CBC tower is situated immediately adjacent to the park where children play, and is within 220 meters of the nearest house. In respect to the special danger to children, the BC Confederation of Parents, which represents 1,000 Parent Advisory Councils from every school district in BC, representing hundreds of thousands of children, resolved that all cell or mobile phone masts or antennae be prohibited in any area used by students.

GERMANY: DON'T USE CELL PHONES

In another startling development, the German government on September 9, 2007, warned its citizens to avoid using cell phones, urging them to use conventionally wired phones. This news report, together with a summary of six studies published by Dr. Grahame Blackwell, were submitted by the Valhalla Committee to the Village Administration and to Alex Atamanenko, MP and Don Munro, RDCK Director.

The Committee, working closely with researchers Penny Bonnett and Art Joyce of New Denver, has also

submitted other reports to the Village Administration, all supportive of the refusal by townspeople to allow any cell phone transmitter in the village of New Denver. In addition, on September 19th, the Committee forwarded to the Village Council a statement from the European Union which is calling for "Urgent Action," stating that delay in acting against exposure to radiation from mobile phones and their masts "could lead to a health crisis similar to those caused by asbestos, smoking and lead in gasoline."

RURAL CELL PHONE USAGE MORE DANGEROUS

Scientific studies suggest that the risk of a tumour from a transmitter is greater for people who are close to it (within 400 metres). But the risk from a cell phone itself increases with greater distance from the transmitter. Research published by Professors Mild and Hardell of

Orebro University, Sweden, in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, identified 1,429 people with brain tumours living in central Sweden in a 2^{1/2} year period. Those who lived in a rural area and used cell phones had a 56% greater likelihood of being

diagnosed with a brain tumour than city users. For those using cell phones for 5 years, the rural user's risk was four times greater.

Professor Mild, who is a biologist at Orebro University, states "Mobile phones can use up to 1,000

times more power when they are far away from a base station." Those using cell phones in rural areas at a distance from the transmitter "absorb far more energy from the handset."

FIRE FIGHTERS' UNION OPPOSES CELL PHONE TOWERS

Caniell states that all the reports can be viewed by the public on their website www.vws.org. Among the documents posted on this site is an important release by the International Association of Fire Fighters. Its 31-page report concludes that the firefighters "oppose the use of fire stations as base stations for towers and/or antennas for the conduction of cell phone transmissions until it is proven that such sitings are not hazardous to the health of our members." This conclusion was forced upon the Association in the face of world-wide reports of health hazards and fatalities. The report states: "we simply don't know what the health consequences of long-term exposure to low intensity radio frequency/microwave radiation of the type used by cell phone base stations and antennas will be — the data just isn't there."

On September 21st the Committee notified Health Canada of the existence of the 610-page BioInitiative Report, asking that Health Canada suspend its approval of cell tower transmission, and so inform Telus, until it has completely reviewed and integrated these massively adverse findings. The Committee letter states that this is the very least that should be done to meet the requirements of the Precautionary Principle. This safeguard is a moral and political principle which states that "if an action or policy *might* cause severe or irreversible harm to the public, in the absence of a scientific consensus that harm would not ensue, the burden of proof falls on those who would advocate taking the action." This principle was adopted by the European Union and other nations, the World Court and recently in BC in the Sunshine Coast RDCK court case.

Caniell observed that Telus does not escape responsibility for its actions simply because they rely on Health Canada, as effective notice of extensive science

showing health hazards has been given to them directly, and they are the active parties.

The BioInitiative Report, after citing brain tumors and leukemia as major consequences, states that a host of other health consequences emerge from these studies. These are: "headache, fatigue, sleeplessness, dizziness, changes in brain wave activity and impairment of concentration and memory, cognitive function, cardiac effects and changes in immune system (allergies and inflammatory responses)."

The 14 scientists and medical doctors whose work is shown in the BioInitiative Report join in the conclusions: "The existing public safety standards limiting radiation levels in nearly every country of the world look to be thousands of times too lenient. Changes are needed."

Health Canada's assurances of safety for cell phone transmission and usage have been based on thermal effects, whereas the scientific reports, which BioInitiative has collected, arrive at a different conclusion: "Effects occur at non-thermal or low intensity exposure levels thousands of times *below* the levels that federal agencies say should keep the public safe."

The Report's alarming conclusion is that "the existing standards have been proven to be inadequate to control against harm from low-intensity, chronic exposures, based on any reasonable, independent assessment of the scientific literature . . . new exposure standards are needed."

The BioInitiative Scientific Report concludes, "There may be no limit at which exposures do not affect us . . . it is unwise from a public health perspective to continue 'business-as-usual' deploying new technologies that increase radio frequency exposures, particularly involuntary exposures."

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DOCUMENTS

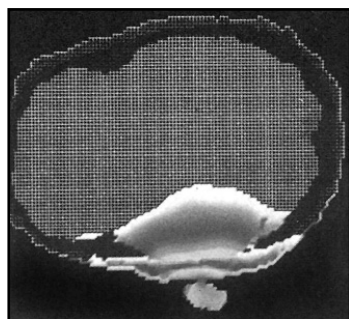
Health Canada's approach is business-as-usual cellular phone use. It ignores the Committee's repeated presentations, but never mentions its internal doubts about the public health hazard. Electro-Magnetic Frequency

Health presents an in-depth news article by the *Toronto Star*, which obtained internal documents from Health Canada through freedom-of-information. The *Toronto Star* reports:

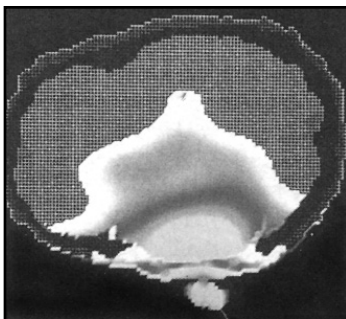
- “A 1998 memo cites ‘significant evidence’ that frequencies similar to those emitted by cell phones could allow carcinogens and other toxins to seep into the brain. And recommendations for aggressive research funding in this area — including studies aimed at children — have been ignored, the documents show.”
- “‘If there are health risks, even if small, the economic impact in terms of health-care costs is expected to be great because of the prevalence of (radio frequency) exposure in our daily lives,’ says a 1999 internal Health Canada document.”
- “Another document from the same year concedes that Canada ‘lags significantly behind efforts (of) other G-7 countries’ on research into radio frequency effects and says ‘inspection and enforcement is very weak or non-existent.’ The document called for a 10-year, \$11.5 million research program to ‘allow relevant risk management options to be proposed.’ That research funding never materialized.”
- “A year later, another Health Canada proposal argued that studying cellphone effects on children’s brains and eyes was necessary for ‘risk assessment,’ would help reduce ‘the possibility that acute health effects will develop in children,’ and would provide the knowledge needed to ensure that the department’s regulatory approach would ‘adequately protect children.’ The calculated cost for such research was \$700,000 a year. It never came.”
- “One internal Health Canada document plainly states, ‘Children are at the highest risk from (radio frequency) exposures.’ ”

SECOND-HAND RADIATION AND EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

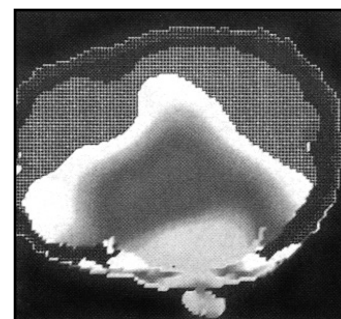
The BioInitiative Report showed significant differences in the effect of cell phone radiation on adults and children. The photos, presented by Dr. George Carlo in his book *Cell Phones: Invisible Hazards in the Wireless Age*, tell the story.



Radiation penetration:
adult



Radiation penetration:
10-year-old



Radiation penetration:
5-year-old

Worse, what BioInitiatives tell us in their Summary for the Public is that “second-hand radiation, like second-hand smoke, is an issue of public health concern based on the evidence at hand.” Meanwhile, the Telecommunication industry is aiming its advertising at teens and children. A cell phone is not only a status symbol, its convenience induces extended use as children, incapable of caring about risk factors, use them day and night for long periods.

THE IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

When it comes to protecting children and teenagers, consider the concern about exposure guidelines expressed by Norbert Hankin, Chief EMF Scientist for the US Environmental Agency: he stated, “The U.S. Federal Communications Commission, (FCC’s) exposure guidelines are considered protective of effects arising from a thermal mechanism *but not from all possible mechanisms*. The generalization by many that the guidelines protect human beings from harm by any and all mechanisms is not justified.” (emphasis added)

Massive evidence, from scientific studies around the

world, indicates that there may be particularly grave dangers from cell transmitters to children and teenagers whose brains are in development and whose immune systems are not yet mature.

Advertisers are endeavoring to make children their new market for cell phones. For instance, the National Post devoted an entire page (August 25, 2007) under the heading BACK TO SCHOOL. It shows two 12-year-old boys holding 8 different electronic devices – iPods, pc (computer), etc, and states, “The older your child gets, the more he or

especially she will regard a mobile phone as a necessity." It urges parents to equip their kids with "the cheapest cell phone on the market: the Nokia 21251 at \$40."

A U.S. study shows 50% of children own their own cell-phone", Canadian studies show "one in 5 children, age 8 to 11, have a wireless phone, a number expected to quadruple by 2008." A European

study shows "87% of 11-to 16 year-olds own mobile phones" and "70% said they would not give up their cell phones in the face of government warnings." Another European study indicates that deep penetration from cell phones into children's brains could cause kids to lose the ability to concentrate and remember, making it impossible to learn, even after very short-term use.

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE WIRELESS INDUSTRY

This advertising approach rests on the fact that in the attractive, reassuring pamphlet distributed by the Canadian Wireless Telecommunication Association (CWTA), the text asks and answers a question of crucial concern some persons have come to feel about cell phones, having learned they might be dangerous. The text asks, "Can cell phones give me cancer?" Answer: "No. There is no scientifically demonstrated connection

between mobile telecommunications equipment and cancer." Elsewhere in the pamphlet the CWTA's text indicated they are aware of some of the damning scientific reports. Its text refers to it as the existence of "questionable interpretations of some recent studies that have confused the public [but] the overwhelming opinion of the scientific community is that there are no adverse health effects."

WEIGHING THE CELL PHONE BENEFITS AND DANGERS

Many proponents of cell phone usage fix their view on the convenience and the aid they believe the cell phones will provide in emergencies. Yet it can be seen that most everything dangerous to health has some benefit, pleasure or profit, that's what makes it desirable or popular.

The issue in New Denver shows the dangers trump the benefits, as the cell phones are expected to work only within 2 to 6 kilometers of the proposed installation on the CBC tower alongside Carpenter Creek. The steep mountain sides prevent further transmission. Dr. Neil Cherry states that fibre optic cables (already laid in New Denver) could provide Internet, fax, telephone,

radio and television of very high quality. Emergencies could be better handled by radio/satellite phones (which are already in use) without the dangers generated by cell phone transmission and usage.

What's more, the limited improvement in possibly making an emergency report by a few persons that *might* need them would be at the expense of health hazards to everyone using the cell phones and to near bystanders, not to mention danger to non-users who live within the radiation plume (400 meters in radius) sent from the cell tower facility into residential areas.

A SOLUTION

We call on Telus, the CBC and Health Canada to prove that cell phone transmission and usage is safe. We call on Health Canada to go beyond its narrow concern for thermal or heat effects to consider the effect of cell phone radio frequencies on human cells and DNA in human beings, which tests include considering the effects of low frequencies for protracted duration. In the absence of legitimate proof of safety, the New Denver community has a right to protect itself until such safety has been demonstrated. We call on Health Canada,

Telus and the CBC to adopt the precautionary principles already embedded in law and clearly applicable in our community. The extensive body of scientific reports that contradict Health Canada's assurance that cell phone transmission and usage is safe fully justifies our concerns. It would be improvident for them to ignore it.

Our conclusion, in view of the extensive corroboration given our concerns, is to urge resistance to the installation of a cell phone transmission tower anywhere in New Denver.

Your life may depend on it.

Richard Caniell, Chairperson
VALHALLA COMMITTEE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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