

VALHALLA COMMITTEE For Environmental Health

Box 329, New Denver, British Columbia, Canada VOG 1S0
250-358-2333 (studio) 250-358-7950 (fax)
vws@vws.org ♦ www.vws.org

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PRESS RELEASE

NEW DENVER RESISTANCE TO CELL PHONES SUPPORTED BY MASSIVE SCIENTIFIC REPORT

On September 16th the Valhalla Committee for Environmental Health, a subgroup of the Valhalla Wilderness Society headed by Richard Caniell, submitted a 610-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 connected to 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 devices (cell phones), “there is enough evidence of increased risk of brain tumors 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, Caniell 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 less than 150 meters away from the nearest house. In connection with the special danger to children, the BC Confederation of Parents which represent 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 antenna be prohibited in any area used by students.

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 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 researcher Penny Bonnet 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 report from the European Union which was calling for “Urgent Action,” stating that delay in acting against exposure to radiation from mobile phones and their masts “could lead to a health crises similar to those caused by asbestos, smoking and lead in gasoline.”

The Valhalla Committee is particularly concerned about the consequences of cell phone usage in the New Denver area because scientific reports state that there is a much higher tumour risk for

rural users. Research published by Professors Mild and Hardell of Orebro University, Sweden, in the journal Occupational and Environmental Medicine, identified 1,429 people living in central Sweden identified with brain tumours in a 2 ½ year period. Those who live in a rural area and used cell phones had a 56% greater likelihood to have been diagnosed with a brain tumour over 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."

Caniell notes that Health Canada continues to insist that all cell phone use is safe while ignoring substantial scientific reports of hazard from around the world. "How many people have to suffer or die before these volumes of adverse evidence are considered?" he asks. "We have to recognize that many people are the victims of the convenience of cell phones and refuse to acknowledge the existence of any dangers. Well, they will have to pay the consequences, as will their families because bystander radiation, like second-hand smoke, is also a health hazard. Eventually, society as a whole, will also pay huge medical costs for treatment and hospitalization of these victims."

Caniell states that all the reports can be viewed by the public on their website yws@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 RF/MW 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 put Health Canada on notice as to 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 EU version states that "preventative action should be taken and damage should, as a priority, be rectified at the source and that the polluter should pay." Caniell observed that Telus does not escape responsibility for its actions simply because they rely on Health Canada, as effective notice of extensive adverse science showing health hazard has been given to them directly, and they are the active parties.

Contact:
Richard Caniell

Home (Studio): 250-358-2586
Fax: 250-358-2298
E-mail: madeleine@vws.org