

DAVID R. GRAHAM  
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# DANGERS OF LIVING NEAR CELL PHONE TOWERS RAISED

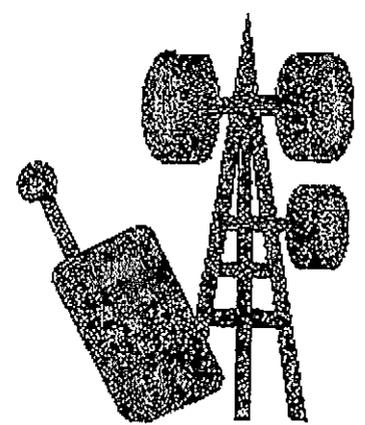
November 2008  
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**La Mesa Council holds  
hearing Nov. 5 on  
proposal to erect cell  
phone  
tower in Lake Murray  
area**

By Miriam Raftery



When Mom asked me to look into possible health hazards posed by cell phone panel antennas that a church in her neighborhood wants to put up, I expected

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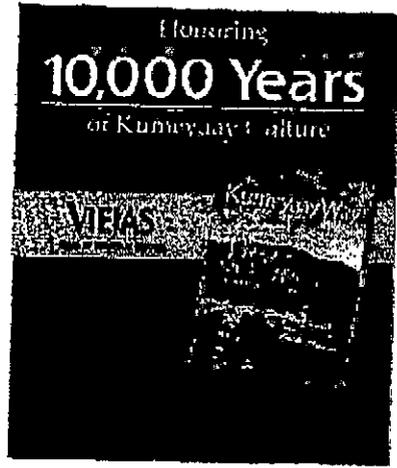


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to find reassuring facts to allay Mom's concerns. Instead, I found deeply disturbing data that makes me wonder why the public is not being informed about health risks—and why our government seems intent on covering up troubling truths.

Cell phone companies and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration assert that cell phone towers don't pose health risks to the public. Some studies support this assertion, but other studies suggest just the opposite. Harvard-trained Dr. Andrew Weil at the University of Arizona's medical center recently observed, "In January 2008, the National Research Council (NRC), an arm of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering, issued a report saying that we simply don't know enough about the potential health risks of long-term exposure to RF energy from cell phones themselves, cell towers, television towers, and other components of our communications system. The scientists who prepared the report emphasized, in particular, the unknown risks to the health of children, pregnant women, and fetuses as well as of workers whose jobs



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entail high exposure to RF (radiofrequency) energy....Because so much of cell phone technology is new and evolving, we don't have data on the consequences of 10, 20 or 30 years worth of exposure to the RF energy they emit," Weil concluded. The report called for long-term safety studies on all wireless devices including cell phones, computers, and cell phone towers.

A 2006 report issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) offered some reassurance and found no scientific evidence that radiofrequency signals from cell towers cause adverse health effects. The report noted that up to five times more of the RF signals from FM radio and television (than from cell towers) are absorbed by the body with no known adverse effects on health in the more than 50 years that radio and TV broadcast stations have been operating.

But an Australian study found that children living near TV and FM broadcast towers, which emit similar radiation to cell towers, developed leukemia at three times the rate of children living over seven miles away.

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If you live within a quarter mile of a cell phone antenna or tower, you may be at risk of serious harm to your health, according to a German study cited at [www.EMF-Health.com](http://www.EMF-Health.com), a site devoted to exposing hazards associated with electromagnetic frequencies from cell phone towers and other sources.

Cancer rates more than tripled among people living within 400 meters of cell phone towers or antennas, a German study found. Those within 100 meters were exposed to radiation at 100 times normal levels. An Israeli study found risk of cancer quadrupled among people living within 350 meters (1,148 feet) of a cell phone transmitter—and seven out of eight cancer victims were women. Both studies focused only on people who had lived at the same address for many years.

Other studies have found that levels of radiation emitted from cell phone towers can damage cell tissues and DNA, causing miscarriage, suppressing immune function, and causing other health problems.

Astoundingly, the federal government does not allow

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rejection of a cell phone tower based on health risks, according to a 2005 article. A Google search found no evidence that this situation has changed.

Yet over 1.9 million cell phone towers and antennae have been approved nationwide without federal studies to assure safety of those living nearby.

How many cell phone towers and antennas are in your neighborhood? Find out at www.antennasearch.com. I plugged in my address on Mt. Helix, hardly an urban stronghold, and was astounded to discover that there are 96 cell phone towers, 286 antennas and 2 proposals for new towers within four miles of my home!

So how about Mom's neighborhood, where an Evangelical church insists a new tower is needed? Mom gets perfectly fine cell phone reception, and so do the neighbors she's spoken with—not surprising since there are already 113 towers and 335 antennas within a four-mile radius.

Churches, schools, fire stations, and other buildings are increasingly erecting cell phone towers or antennas because cell phone companies are willing to pay

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rental fees of hundreds or even thousands of dollars a month—welcome infusions for cash-strapped budgets. But at what cost to the public's health? There are young children in Mom's neighborhood, less than one block from the proposed cell phone antenna site.

In Sweden, the government requires interventions to protect the public from electromagnetic frequencies. Why isn't the U.S. government paying attention to this potential risk to public safety?

If you wish to share your views on the T-Mobile proposed cell phone tower at 5777 Lake Murray Blvd. (near Marengo Avenue), the La Mesa City Council will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, November 5th at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at the La Mesa City Hall, 8130 Allison Ave., La Mesa.

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