

ONLINE VERSION

Desire for Connectivity May Come at a Cost to Our Health

In October 2022, like many people, I didn't give much thought to all the wireless devices that surround me, beyond some concerns about privacy and hacking. After all, devices and wireless access have become a ubiquitous part of our lives. I kept hearing about 5G, but I really didn't know much about it, and it sounded too overwhelming and incomprehensible to investigate. Then I found out that 2 new cell towers were being proposed on agricultural land in the Comox Valley—and that's when I knew I needed to start paying attention.

I started delving into the research on radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation (RF-EMR) and was frankly shocked by what I found. What I found was a substantial body of peer-reviewed scientific evidence by credible and respected scientists—people like Dr. Martin Pall, Dr. Devra Davis, Dr. Meg Sears, Dr. Suleyman Kaplan, Dr. Anthony Miller, Dr. Joel Moskowitz and many others—that raised troubling health and safety concerns. The technology I had come to assume was generally not a concern had, in fact, been shown in hundreds of studies (primarily done on current wireless technologies of 2G, 3G, and 4G) to cause adverse health effects in bees and other pollinators, birds and other animals, plants and trees, and people—especially children. These effects were even observed at low-intensity exposure levels, below Canada's recommended safety limits of 3 kHz to 300 GHz (the radiation frequency range that wireless devices give off). In 2011, the WHO/International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified RF-EMF (radiofrequency electromagnetic fields, otherwise known as “wireless radiation”) as a Class 2B Possible Human Carcinogen, based on credible evidence linking long term wireless exposure to brain cancer. As retired Trent University Professor Dr Magda Havas puts it, “Our love affair with wireless technology is making us sick.”

As I began to connect with other concerned people in the valley, I also met and heard about people with a condition called electromagnetic hypersensitivity or EHS. (Unlike several European countries, Canada does not consider EHS a 'recognized medical condition'.) These people's lives are very constricted. They have had to fortify their homes with EMF shielding products and modify their lives to reduce exposure to wireless radiation. When they leave their homes, they experience symptoms, especially when travelling through areas that have a strong cell tower presence, like Nanaimo (did you know Nanaimo became the first “Smart City” in Canada in June 2022, when 5G service was activated?). When people with EHS are close to cell towers or other sources of RF-EMR pollution, they can experience symptoms such as headaches, dizziness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, sleep problems, nausea, heart palpitations, and more.

While I'm all for connectivity, it should not come at the expense of people's health and the health of the environment. There are more acceptable options. Wired is always safer, not to mention faster, more energy efficient and more secure than wireless (connected-communities.ca). A cell tower is not necessary in order for us to have connectivity in our homes. We are told that the reason we need these two towers is to address spotty receptivity for when we are travelling on certain short sections of road or

for when we are out in the wilderness. But having connectivity on the road or out in the wilderness should not come at the cost of exposing an entire area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to RF-EMR radiation from cell towers, thus increasing the overall bio-active, non-ionizing radiation levels we are already exposed to, even in our homes.

The Environmental Health Trust envisions “a thriving world where technology is both state-of-the-art and safe for all.” I think that’s a vision we can all embrace. Until there is PROOF that long-term exposure to RF-EMR from cell towers doesn’t harm and that it isn’t a public health risk, then due diligence and the precautionary principle should apply. The health of our communities and our environment must take priority. If you wish to learn more about this issue and connect with a growing group of concerned people, please reach out to the Vancouver Island Safe Tech Alliance at VISafeTechAlliance@proton.me.

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In October 2022, like many people, I didn’t give much thought to all the wireless devices that surround me, beyond some concerns about privacy and hacking. Then I found out that 2 new cell towers were being proposed on agricultural land in the Comox Valley—and that’s when I started to pay attention. I started delving into the research on radiofrequency electromagnetic radiation (RF-EMR) and was frankly shocked by what I found. What I found was a substantial body of peer-reviewed scientific evidence by credible and respected scientists—people like Dr. Martin Pall, Dr. Devra Davis, Dr. Meg Sears, Dr. Suleyman Kaplan, Dr. Anthony Miller, Dr. Joel Moskowitz and many others—that raised troubling health and safety concerns. Hundreds of studies (primarily done on the current wireless technologies of 2G, 3G, and 4G) have found adverse health effects in bees and other pollinators, birds and other animals, plants and trees, and people—especially children. These effects were even observed at low-intensity exposure levels, below Health Canada’s recommended safety limits. Then I began to meet and hear about people who had a debilitating condition called electromagnetic hypersensitivity or EHS. When they are close to cell towers or other sources of RF-EMR pollution—like travelling through Nanaimo, Canada’s first “Smart City”—they can experience symptoms like headaches, dizziness, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, sleep problems, nausea, and more. While I’m all for connectivity, it should not come at the expense of people’s health and the health of the environment. The Environmental Health Trust envisions “a thriving world where technology is both state-of-the-art and safe for all.” I think that’s a vision we can all embrace. Until there is PROOF that long-term exposure to RF-EMR from cell towers doesn’t harm and that it isn’t a public health risk, then due diligence and the precautionary principle should apply. The health of our communities and our environment must take priority. If you wish to learn more about this issue and connect with a growing group of concerned people, please reach out to the Vancouver Island Safe Tech Alliance at VISafeTechAlliance@proton.me.