
CELL TOWER SAFETY

A CITIZEN'S TOOL BOX

What You Need to Know

1. Federal law prohibits state and local agencies, including zoning boards, from basing tower/antenna siting and construction permits on the harmful environmental effects of radiofrequency (RF) radiation emissions "to the extent that facilities comply with" the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) regulations. [47 USC Sec. 332(c)(7)(iv)]. Courts and the FCC have interpreted this law to apply to "human health."
2. FCC RF safety standards are based on protection of humans against thermal effects from high power levels of RF radiation. The FCC radiation limits do not protect people from adverse biological effects of long term RF exposure or take into account the impact on children or other especially vulnerable citizens.
3. Legal advocates argue that FCC RF safety standards do not extend to harmful effects on animals or wildlife. Test cases to determine this are pending in the courts.

When to Challenge Cell Tower/Antenna Site Construction

1. When a tower/antenna site is to be constructed within 1500 feet (an internationally recognized precautionary standard) of a school, playground, daycare center or other childcare facility, homes with small children.
2. When a tower/antenna site is to be constructed within ½ mile of a significant wildlife refuge or habitat; bird nesting area; protected or endangered species area.
3. When a tower/antenna site is to be constructed in or near a migratory bird flyway.

What You Can Do – Careful Research Is Essential

1. You must be factually accurate in all your statements and arguments in opposition to any cell tower or other transmission antenna. Telecommunications company representatives fight hard and will try to show you up and embarrass you on any misstatements or mistakes you make.
2. Visit www.emrpolicy.org . Print out copies of all relevant studies on health risks to children and threats to wildlife including (a) U.S. Supreme Court *amicus curiae* brief of the Healthy Schools Network on risks to school children [linked to the Case Law page]; (b) the Benevento Resolution [linked to the EMR Regulation -International page]; and (c) Statement on Harmful Effects on Migratory Birds and Endangered Species (by Janet Newton) [linked to the Case Law page]. Send an e-mail to: info@emrpolicy.org to ask further questions. .
3. Visit <http://erg.usgs.gov/> to order a topographic map covering the tower/antenna site location. Mark the locations of schools, libraries, day care centers, playgrounds, and other children's facilities on the map. Also parks and nature areas. Calculate actual distances. Collect data on the numbers and ages of children using each. Use map as an exhibit at any public hearing – it shows you have done your homework.
4. Visit your State' Department of Environmental Protection (DEP, or equivalent) web site. Look for wildlife maps, information and publications on endangered species, wetlands, bird habitats and parks in

the vicinity of the proposed tower/antenna site. Order copies of materials and nature guides from the DEP bookstore. As government publications, these materials are very credible and persuasive.

5. Contact your local health department, hospital, or nearest university to see if an epidemiology study can be initiated to determine the state of health of residents living within 1500 feet of the tower/antenna site before it is built, and then a follow-up study to compare health results in the same households after the tower is operating. Contact The EMR Policy Institute for a model health questionnaire. Such a study will provide powerful evidence for news media and elected representatives to act upon.

What You Can Do – Establish Substantial Evidence in the Written Record

1. Provide your local zoning board with documents that demonstrate their responsibility to protect the values that are delineated in the existing municipal plan and zoning regulations. The Telecommunications Acts of 1996 preserves local government authority to deny tower-antenna site zoning permits if based on “substantial evidence in a written record.” Such evidence includes:
 - obtaining independent expert analysis to determine whether “adequate coverage” for mobile phone service already exists;
 - exercising the zoning board’s authority to protect residential areas against property devaluation and to preserve the character of neighborhoods;
 - requiring proof of liability insurance by the wireless provider to cover negative impacts of tower/antenna sites such as property devaluation and potential future adverse health impacts;
 - requiring adequate set backs from tower/antenna sites to protect against falling equipment and tower collapse due to severe weather conditions as well as other safety hazards;
2. Contact The EMR Policy Institute directly for this documentation.

What You Can Do – Involve Your Elected Representatives

1. Contact the “scheduler” or “constituent services” staff member for your:
 - State Representative
 - State Senator
 - U. S. Congressman
2. Ask these elected officials to appear and speak at the public hearing in opposition to the proposed tower/antenna site. Give them the results of your research on biological health risks for children and wildlife. Ask them each to contact the proper government agencies to request **research** into available scientific studies on risks to children and to request **enforcement** of wildlife protection laws.

What You Can Do – Spread the Word

1. Speak at the official public hearing on the tower/antenna site construction. Use your best research – do not overstate anything. **Make it clear that you are not opposed to cell phones per se, but want more safety precautions to make the entire systems safer, especially for young children and for ambient exposures to wildlife.**
2. Educate the editor/reporters for your local newspaper, TV and radio stations.
3. Distribute well-written handbills at shopping centers in the area.
4. Write letters; send out mailings; use e-mail.

What You Can Do - Educate Your Congressional Offices in Washington, DC

1. Check the **Action Alert** page at: www.emrpolicy.org on a regular basis.
2. Watch for instructions for contacting the staff members at your Congressional offices.
3. Request that they attend briefings on EMR public health policy. A briefing is planned for May 10, 2007.

For additional help, contact The EMR Policy Institute at: info@emrpolicy.org or Tel: 802-426-3035.