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OPEN LETTER: Medical Officer of Health -- WiFi in Schools, September 29, 2010

Could you please consider making a public announcement about the potentially harmful effects of WiFi radiation in the school environment. Specifically, that schools should reconsider placing WiFi in the classroom for continuous daily exposure and that those schools that already have WiFi should consider turning the WiFi off when not in use, and disconnecting WiFi that is never used, in kindergartens for example.

I ask this based on 15 years of research and thousands of documents showing this radiation may be harmful at low levels, well below Safety Code 6 Guidelines.

1. Recent report by the **Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (2010)** which acknowledges potentially adverse health effects associated with cell phone use after 10 years of exposure and living near cell phone towers.
2. **City of Toronto Public Health** requested voluntary reduction of exposure to 1% of Safety Code 6, which would be in line with Russian Guidelines of 10 microW/cm² for cell phone antennas (2000).
3. **City of Toronto Public Health** issued a warning for young children to minimize their use of cell phones (2008).
4. Report by **Royal Society of Canada (1999)** stating that there are biological effects that occur below Safety Code 6 and that these may have harmful health effects and that the guidelines are inadequate to protect the eyes of workers.
5. **Health Canada's Safety Code 6 Report (2009)** that states the following in the Preface:

*The purpose of this code is to establish safety limits for human exposure to radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic energy in the frequency range from 3 kHz to 300 GHz. The safety limits in this code apply to all individuals working at, or visiting, federally regulated sites. **These guidelines may also be adopted by the provinces, industry or other interested parties.** The Department of National Defence shall conform to the requirements of this safety code, except in such cases where it considers such compliance to have a detrimental effect on its activities in support of training and operations of the Canadian Forces. This code has been adopted as the scientific basis for*

the equipment certification specifications outlined in Industry Canada's regulatory compliance documents⁽¹⁻³⁾, that govern the use of wireless devices in Canada, such as cell phones, cell towers (base stations) and broadcast antennae. Safety Code 6 does not apply to the deliberate exposure for treatment of patients by, or under the direction of, medical practitioners. Safety Code 6 is not intended for use as a product performance specification document, as the limits in this safety code are for controlling human exposure and are independent of the source of RF energy.

In a field where technology is advancing rapidly and where unexpected and unique problems may occur, this code cannot cover all possible situations. Consequently, the specifications in this code may require interpretation under special circumstances. This interpretation should be done in consultation with scientific staff at the Consumer and Clinical Radiation Protection Bureau, Health Canada.

*The safety limits in this code are based on an ongoing review of published scientific studies on the health impacts of radiofrequency electromagnetic energy. **This code is periodically revised to reflect new knowledge in the scientific literature and the exposure limits may be modified, if deemed necessary.***

Scientists and Medical Doctors have signed **Resolutions and Appeals** asking International Agencies (ICNIRP) to reduce guidelines due to both biological and health effects. These include: The Salzburg Resolution (2000), Catania Resolution (2002), Freiburger Appeal (2002), Irish Doctors' Environmental Associate Appeal (2005), Helsinki Appeal (2005), Benevento Resolution (2006), BioInitiative Report (2007), Venice Appeal (2008), and the Porto Alegre Resolutions (2009).

Also, countries are issuing warnings about cell phones use including: United Kingdom (2000), Germany (2007), France (2008), Russia (2008), India (2008), Toronto Public Health (2008), Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (2008), Belgium (2008), Finland (2009), Seoul Korea (2009), and the most recent being the U.S. Federal Communication Commission (2009).

While setting guidelines for radio frequency radiation is a federal issue, it does not exempt provincial, municipal, and regional health authorities from protecting the people under their jurisdiction. Nor does it exempt schools from protecting their staff and students. We look to Health Canada for guidance but we need to question the guidelines when the evidence so strongly indicates this form of radiation is harmful.

Please, consider this request to issue a warning that simply acknowledges the truth, which is that children are more sensitive to agents in the environment and we do not know the long-term effects of this radiation on children, so we should err on the side of caution and use the precautionary approach when it comes to microwave radiation in the school and home environment.

Respectfully,
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