



C4ST's reply to Peel Region's "Response to Commonly Asked Questions"

Peel Region: Peel Board relies on the expertise and standards of organizations like Peel Public Health and Health Canada to guide their use of technology.

C4ST: Parents, teachers and students have not been adequately informed that Wi-Fi and all radiofrequency radiation has been on the World Health Organization's Class 2b List of Possible Carcinogens for more than two years (since May 2011). Lead and DDT are also included on this list.

Peel Region: Access points the Peel board is installing in schools and offices are intelligent and operate at a fraction of the power of home routers.

C4ST: Blanket Wi-Fi systems in other school districts such as Simcoe County have been measured to exceed Health Canada's safety limits for human exposure to microwave radiation. This may be because the school systems are designed to operate hundreds of computers simultaneously, unlike home based consumer systems which only operate a handful of computers. Once many computers are tuned on, the microwave radiation becomes unbearable for some. This may be the reason why school children have been so severely affected in other Boards. It is scientifically accepted that children are more vulnerable to the biological effects of microwave exposure than adults.

Peel Region: Health Canada's guidelines are comparable to most of Europe.

C4ST: Health Canada has not updated its' guideline since the 1980's. China, Italy and Switzerland have safety limits 100 times lower than Canada's. Schools and libraries in France and Switzerland have already removed Wi-Fi due to the harmful health effects. Our guideline, Safety Code 6, is currently being reviewed by a panel that is significantly conflicted through its connections to the wireless industry, in C4ST's view.

Peel Region: WHO has not concluded that Wi-Fi is a carcinogen.

C4ST: The Peel District School Board statement is misleading to teachers and students in its schools. **Wi-Fi is 100%** part of the WHO cancer warning list. In May, 2011 the World Health Organization classified radiofrequency radiation as "Class 2B possibly carcinogenic". This was confirmed by the Chair of the International Agency for Research on Cancer Dr. Jonathon Samet, who made the recommendation.

To understand the level of caution required, it is important to note that the Class 2b List identifies emerging hazards that are not yet fully understood. For example the Class 2b List of possible carcinogens also includes Lead, DDT and car exhaust. These are potentially harmful substances and agents that we now limit in the presence of children which is one of the purposes of the Class 2b List.



This fact was further re-confirmed by Dr. Robert Baan, a member of the IARC committee. Dr. Baan has stated that the “Possibly Carcinogenic” classification is not limited to cell phone radiation as erroneously communicated by Peel District School Board. In fact, says Dr. Baan, it “**holds for all types of radiation** within the radiofrequency part of the electromagnetic spectrum, **including** the radiation emitted by base-station antennas, radio/TV towers, radar, Wi-Fi, smart meters, etc.”

Peel Region: Health Canada’s position is that no precautionary measures are needed.

C4ST: In October, 2011, Health Canada issued a cell phone use warning for children under 18 years of age. Health Canada “encourages parents to reduce children’s RF (radiofrequency radiation) exposure from cell phones since children are typically more sensitive to a variety of environmental agents”. Peel District School Board’s Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy is contrary to Health Canada’s suggestions for reduced exposure to cell phones and wireless devices in order to protect children from potential harm.

Health Canada has been consistently late in reacting to harm to Canadians: asbestos, tobacco, BPA are some examples. Parents have reported to C4ST that Peel District School Board is not communicating an appropriate level of caution given the WHO classification and the direct request by the American Academy of Environmental Medicine to avoid Wi-Fi in schools due to the health effects on children.

Peel Region: Research has not been able to provide support for a causal relationship between exposure to electromagnetic fields and self-reported symptoms, or *electromagnetic hypersensitivity*.”

C4ST: In a letter to Mr. Tony Pontes, Director of Education, Peel District School Board, the American Academy of Environmental Medicine warned that “To install this widespread wireless internet access system in Peel District schools risks a widespread public health hazard that the medical system is not yet prepared to address. Statistics show that you can expect to see an immediate reaction in 3% and delayed effects in 30%, including teachers.”

Electrosensitivity exists. The National Post article, “Sick of Wi-Fi: The debate over wireless safety is not going away”, 12/08/11 ([click here to read](#)), references Dr. Riina Bray, environmental health specialist at Toronto’s prestigious Women’s College Hospital. “Dr. Bray’s clinic may be the only mainstream medical facility in Canada that routinely treats patients for a condition known as electromagnetic hypersensitivity.”

The Austrian Medical Association has developed a guideline for the diagnosis and treatment of wireless radiation related health problems and illnesses. ([click here to read](#)) The European Council Parliamentary Assembly in its Resolution 1815 states: “The assembly recommends that the member states of the Council of Europe pay particular attention to “electrosensitive” people who suffer from a syndrome of intolerance to electromagnetic fields”. ([click here to read](#))



In Sweden, electrosensitivity is an officially fully recognized functional impairment. ([click here to read](#)) Some hospitals have built special rooms so that people who are hypersensitive can get medical care. There is government funding for remediation necessary for daily living.

Peel Region: As teachers become increasingly familiar with technology and its use in the classroom, they will begin to incorporate more digital resources into their lessons.

C4ST: Supports the use of technology in the classroom and applauds the creative use of digital resources, safely. The use of technology and access to the internet does not require the constant bombardment of children to microwave radiation. Land lines are the safe option for internet access.

Peel Region: Wi-Fi will be installed in every Peel school. For the most part, all areas of the school will have Wi-Fi coverage. As such, accommodations cannot be made for students whose parents request they be taught in an area where there is no Wi-Fi.

C4ST: As per the above, electro sensitivity exists. Based on the American Academy of Environmental Medicine's prediction, ([click here to read](#)) as many as 3,000 students in Peel region may show an immediate reaction to Wi-Fi technology. Similar to accommodating allergies in school, it is the responsibility of the Board to ensure the safety of students and teachers. The policy to deny accommodation to children affected by microwave radiation contravenes the human rights of children in Canada. The Peel District School Board policies and actions could be viewed as being negligent with respect to the health risks of its students. Furthermore, it is not reasonable to deny the existence of the World Health Organization classification of Wi-Fi as possibly carcinogenic. Moreover, it is misleading to refer to a 2006 WHO document to refute the 2011 Class 2b classification. It is unfair to pretend there is no risk when the highest authority in the world reports there is a risk.

For more information, and to send your concerns to the Peel District School Board visit

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