

Suggested Content For Your Letter To The Government Management Committee

(use points below as a basis for your concerns)

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to urge you to reject the motion for free Wi-Fi in parks and public spaces at the GMC meeting Friday September 18th, 2015. Please consider the following and maintain The City of Toronto as an environmental leader by exercising caution regarding Wi-Fi radiation health effects; and to avoid another hit to Toronto taxpayers.

In June 2015 the Conservatives, Liberals, and NDP on the Parliamentary Health Committee (HESA) unanimously voted to educate and protect Canadians from the growing concern around wireless radiation. The committee tabled 12 recommendations into the House of Parliament which will be reviewed and responded to by the new government in October. After 3 days of investigation into Safety Code 6, the committee concluded with the following recommendations:

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the Government of Canada, in collaboration with the health departments of the provinces and territories, examine existing cancer data collection methods to improve the collection of information relating to wireless device use and cancer.

RECOMMENDATION 2

That Statistics Canada consider including questions related to electromagnetic hypersensitivity in the Canadian Community Health Survey.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the Government of Canada, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, consider funding research into electromagnetic hypersensitivity testing, diagnosis and treatment, and its possible impacts on health in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That the Canadian Medical Association, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Family Physicians of Canada and the World Health Organization consider updating their guidelines and continuing education materials regarding the diagnosis and treatment of electromagnetic hypersensitivity to ensure they are based on the latest scientific evidence and reflect the symptoms of affected Canadians.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the Government of Canada continue to provide reasonable accommodations for environmental sensitivities, including electromagnetic hypersensitivity, as required under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That Health Canada ensure the openness and transparency of its processes for the review of Safety Code 6, so that all Canadians have an opportunity to be informed about the evidence considered or excluded in such reviews, that outside experts are provided full information when doing independent reviews, and that the scientific rationale for any change is clearly communicated.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That the Government of Canada establish a system for Canadians to report potential adverse reactions to radiofrequency fields.

RECOMMENDATION 8

That an independent scientific body recognized by Health Canada examine whether measures taken and guidelines provided in other countries, such as France and Israel, to limit the exposure of vulnerable populations, including infants, and young children in the school environment, to radiofrequencies should be adopted in Canada.

RECOMMENDATION 9

That the Government of Canada develop an awareness campaign relating to the safe use of wireless technologies, such as cell phones and Wi-Fi, in key environments such as the school and home to ensure that Canadian families and children are reducing risks related to radiofrequency exposure.

RECOMMENDATION 10

That Health Canada conduct a comprehensive review of all existing literature relating to radiofrequency fields and carcinogenicity based on international best practices.

RECOMMENDATION 11

That the Government of Canada, through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, consider funding research into the link between radiofrequency fields and potential health effects such as cancer, genetic damage, infertility, impairment to development and behaviour, harmful effects to eyes and on the brain, cardiovascular, biological and biochemical effects.

RECOMMENDATION 12

That the Government of Canada and manufacturers consider policy measures regarding the marketing of radiation emitting devices to children under the age of 14, in order to ensure they are aware of the health risks and how they can be avoided.

Toronto's Prudent Avoidance level sets it among the best in the world: Two weeks ago on November 4th, 2013 the Toronto Board of Health voted to uphold recommended RF levels for Toronto at 100 times more protective than Health Canada's federal guideline Safety Code 6. Toronto's Prudent

Avoidance matches the RF exposure limits in place in countries China, Russia and India which are also 100 times more stringent than those of Canada's Safety Code 6. Safety Code 6 is outdated, and currently embroiled in a national controversy (<http://www.c4st.org/SC6>). It only takes into account thermal effects from non-ionizing radiation, not the biological effects the research and evidence is pointing to being a major problem. Prudent Avoidance was re-affirmed just last week by the Toronto Board of Health. (<http://www.c4st.org/TorontoPA>)

Toronto is among the world leaders in protecting its citizens from environmental harm. Please maintain this: Toronto's leadership record of putting the health of citizens first is reflected in the pesticide and smoking measures, among many other visionary steps including Prudent Avoidance. To pass this Wi-Fi in parks recommendation would put a black mark on that record.

Canada's standards are lax and the process to fix them is broken: The SC6 levels designated as "safe" were based on science tested in the 1980's on a 220lb mannequin. There is no consideration or distinction for the developing brains and cells of children, weak, or the elderly.

As child advocates world-wide are urging: Children need to put away screens and play outside (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-24670232>) Children have lost touch with nature and the outdoors in just one generation.

Supporting and encouraging opportunities for safe, free, unstructured play, especially outdoors, may be one of the most promising, accessible and cost-effective solutions to increasing child and youth physical activity in Canada, countering rising diabetes rates, behavioral issues, and other health impacts.

(<http://www.activehealthykids.ca/ReportCard/Is%20Active%20Play%20Extinct.aspx>) (<http://www.childnature.ca/article/active-play-outdoors-%E2%80%93-call-action>, Active Play in the Outdoors - A Call to Action | The Child and Nature Alliance of Canada)

The cost of "Free WiFi" will be in the tens of millions to taxpayers..: With costs to consider such as hardware, set-up, maintenance, connections, security, liability etc. The cost of this 'free Wi-Fi' proposal could end up in the tens of millions of dollars to taxpayers. Zurich, a city 7 times smaller than Toronto in terms of population and land mass is looking at a cost of 15 Million for blanket coverage. In 2012 Seattle removed their city wide Wi-Fi coverage at a cost of 50 Million, citing the cost of maintaining network equipment was ultimately too high.