MICRO WAVE NEWS

A Report on Non-Ionizing Radiation

U.S. Govt Seeks Public Comment on Health Impacts of EMF/RF Radiation

New Initiative Has Uncertain Future

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The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has opened an official inquiry into the health effects of electromagnetic fields (EMFs) and wireless (RF) radiation.

In a public notice published in the *Federal Register* on September 21, HHS is asking for advice on the state of the science and the adequacy of current exposure standards and regulations. Comments are due by October 21.

"I encourage scientists, physicians, industry, public health experts, workers, parents, and citizens to bring us the best available evidence so we can identify the gaps and focus federal research where it is needed most," said HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in a press release issued yesterday.

After years of downplaying concerns over potential health effects — to the point of sidelining the National Toxicological Program's (NTP) 10-year, $30 million project showing a "clear evidence" of an RF–cancer risk— the federal government appears ready to reenter the fray.

Whether anything comes out of this is far from clear.

While HHS may seem to be the logical agency to address EMF/RF health impacts, the department has rarely ventured into this ever-controversial area of public health. Some notable exceptions include cell phones, microwave ovens and medical diathermy, though it has done little on these devices for many years.

The statutory authority to regulate cell phones was delegated to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) by the U.S. Congress under the Radiation Control for Health and Safety Act of 1968. (FDA is

part of HHS.) But, even for cell phones, the FDA has taken a back seat to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which set the current RF exposure limits (SARs) for cell phones 30 years ago (see *MWN,* J/A96).

FCC Also Seeking Comments on RF

As it happens, the FCC is itself currently seeking public comment on a more limited number of RF-releated health issues. That official notice appears in the September 22 *Federal Register*. (Here's the press release.) These comments are due by October 22.

In this case, the FCC is responding to a court order stemming from a 2021 court ruling in a lawsuit brought by the Envinronmental Health Trust (EHT), among other groups. RFK Jr. was also one of the petitioners.

EMFs and RF radiation have historically been the purview of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Over 40 years ago, in December 1982, EPA, following years of measurement surveys around the country, announced in the *Federal Register* its intention to propose a national maximum exposure level (see *MWN,* J/F83). It never happened. The effort faded away under pressure from radio and TV broadcasters. EPA has not worked on EMFs or RF for decades.

Simply doing more research will not be easy. Most of the labs that worked on EMF and RF biological and health effects closed down or moved on after government funding dried up. Even the NTP abandoned its follow-up studies a couple of years ago. (NTP is part of HHS.)

One key uncertainty is where this new initiative stands relative to the many other concerns on Kennedy's agenda.

Indeed, on the same day that Kennedy announced the EMF/wireless inquiry, he spoke at a conference in Washington hosted by Children's Health Defense, the non-profit he founded and ran before joining the Trump administration in 2025. There, according to a report from the meeting by STAT News, the health reporting service, Kennedy doubled down on his attacks on vaccines: "RFK Jr., who previously downplayed his vaccine skepticism, has now made it central to his legacy."

And at the same conference, Kennedy revealed that he was also investigating the health impact of jet contrails—the mostly water vapor streaks from high-flying aircraft. Some call them "chemtrails" because, they allege without evidence, the emissions contain harmful chemicals. In its report on Kennedy's keynote address, CNN called chemtrails a "debunked conspiracy theory."

What HHS Is Looking For

Here are the types of EMF/RF information requested by HHS, as spelled out in yesterday's press release:

- **Health experiences and clinical observations.** HHS invites individuals and families to share experiences involving potential adverse health effects they believe may be associated with RF/EMF exposure. The Department also seeks observations from healthcare professionals, researchers, and public health practitioners that may help identify patterns warranting further study.
- **Exposure standards and risk assessment.** HHS seeks evidence concerning existing national and international exposure standards, guidelines, and regulatory frameworks. The Department also seeks information about whether scientific, technical, or regulatory changes could improve the assessment, disclosure, or regulation of wireless radiation exposure.
- **Exposure measurement and public health surveillance.** HHS is requesting information about methods for measuring individual and population-level exposure, potential improvements for assessing real-world exposure, information that should be disclosed to the public, and existing or potential surveillance systems.
- **Potentially sensitive populations.** The RFI asks whether exposure assessment or risk evaluation should differ for populations including children, pregnant women, older adults, people with implanted medical devices, workers with elevated occupational exposure, and people with preexisting medical conditions.
- **Existing scientific evidence.** HHS seeks evidence concerning potential adverse health effects associated with RF radiation exposure, including exposure below current federal limits. The Department also seeks information about cumulative exposure patterns associated with existing and emerging wireless technologies and potential environmental effects.
- **Federal research priorities.** HHS asks researchers and the public to identify the highest-priority gaps in RF/EMF and public health research and recommend ways federal health agencies can better coordinate research, including through the Food and Drug Administration, National Institutes of Health, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(click to enlarge)

Links to Comments Received

Submissions to HHS

Submissions to FCC

HHS, Robert F Kennedy Jr., FDA, EPA, FCC, EHT, ANPRM, vaccines, chemtrails,

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