MICRO WAVE NEWS

A Report on Non-Ionizing Radiation

2010 Short Takes

ICNIRP Guidelines on Genotoxicity

November 15, 2010

If you want to see just how misguided the ICNIRP enterprise really is, take a look at its new EMF exposure guidelines in the December issue of *Health Physics*. [See also our November 10 post.]

Start at the end with the footnote that discloses the composition of its five-member ELF Task Group (p.830): Rüdiger Matthes (Germany, chair), Anders Ahlbom (Sweden), Kari Jokela (Finland), Colin Roy (Australia) and Richard Saunders (U.K.). Only one of them has training in any of the biological sciences. Saunders earned his doctorate in zoology and comparative physiology.

All the others except for Ahlbom work on EMF measurements and dosimetry. Ahlbom is an epidemiologist, who spent a good part of his career showing that EMF exposures are associated with childhood leukemia; a finding he now seems to want to repudiate. The absence of a molecular biologist on the task group might be the reason the guidelines all but dismiss the possibility that ELF EMFs can lead to DNA breaks (which could explain the link to leukemia). ICNIRP states that, "Generally, studies of the effects of low-frequency field exposure of cells have shown no induction of genotoxicity at fields below 50 mT" (500 G or 500,000 mG).

This is simply wrong. Totally wrong. ICNIRP has ignored a large body of work published in peer-reviewed journals. One Swedish team, for instance, showed "highly significant" DNA damage at levels as low as 8 μT (80 mG) —an exposure that is 6,250-times lower than 50 mT! Much of this was known more than a decade ago (see *MWN,* N/D98, pp.9-10.) Just last year, Switzerland's Primo Schär reported significant DNA fragmentation at 1 mT. (See also "Faulty DNA Repair May Explain EMF Role in Childhood Leukemia.")

Is anyone going to hold ICNIRP accountable for these errors and biases?

Search

Microwave News The Web

VIEW SHORT TAKES BY YEAR

2026 Short Takes 2017 Short Takes
2025 Short Takes 2016 Short Takes
2024 Short Takes 2015 Short Takes
2023 Short Takes 2014 Short Takes
2022 Short Takes 2013 Short Takes
2021 Short Takes 2012 Short Takes
2020 Short Takes 2011 Short Takes
2019 Short Takes 2010 Short Takes
2018 Short Takes

RECENT SHORT TAKES

RF Animal Cancer Review Is #1
NTP Lite: All Good in Korea Too
NTP Lite: No Cancer Risk Seen in Japan
ElektrosmogReport Now in English Too
NCI 'Cancer Bioelectricity' Conference
Another WHO RF Review Challenged
Italy's 6 V/m RF Limit at Risk
"NTP Lite": Update from Japan
Schwannoma Puzzle
Korean NTP Lite: Progress Report

Help Support *Microwave News*

National Grid Reveals New ICNIRP Guidelines

November 12, 2010

According to the U.K.'s National Grid, here is ICNIRP's new statement on chronic EMF health risks: "It is the view of ICNIRP that the currently existing scientific evidence that prolonged exposure to low-frequency magnetic fields is causally related with an increased risk of childhood leukemia is too weak to form the basis for exposure guidelines. In particular, if the relationship is not causal, then *no benefit to health will accrue from reducing exposure*" [emphasis added].

At the same time, ICNIRP has doubled the occupational magnetic limit to 10 G (1 mT) and the public exposure limit to 2 G (200 μT).

We will have much more to say about this stunning rejection of precautionary policies in the future [see our November 15 post], but for the moment, we ask: Why did this important news first appear on an EMF Web site run by an electric utility rather than ICNIRP itself? If nothing else, it reinforces the widely-held perception that ICNIRP is a subsidiary of industry. It's high time for full public disclosure on how ICNIRP elects its members and where it gets its money.

Q-Link on Australian TV

November 8, 2010

A follow-up to our "Scams Galore" piece: Today, the Australian TV show MediaWatch ran an item on the Q-Link scam —"Q Are the Missing Link." Well worth a look. The piece was prompted in part by an item in the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* promoting the bogus shield (it has now been thankfully removed from the Web). See also ScienceBlogs and a more detailed piece on Crikey.

Cell Phone Litigation

October 22, 2010

A potentially important decision: "Cell Phone Liability Lawsuits Pre-empted by FCC, 3rd Circuit Rules" in *Law.com* (item actually dated October 25).

« first ‹ previous 1 2

© Copyright Microwave News 2003-2026. All Rights Reserved.