Miami-Dade's 5G Tower Transparency Problem: What Are They Hiding?

By Lissette Monzon

Our community is being littered with unsupervised radiation-emitting equipment—and we're being told to accept it without question.

All across Kendall in Miami-Dade County, residents have been waking up to find 5G "small cell" towers built just inches from their property lines—without warning, consent, or clear answers.

What began as a tech infrastructure rollout has spiraled into an accountability and transparency, public health and safety issue that local government is dodging at nearly every corner.

Here are the problems:

Public Records Withheld—Why?

In a troubling twist, Miami-Dade County has refused to release key public records related to financial transactions between Crown Castle, the private telecom infrastructure company behind the towers, and the county's Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW). These records include payment details, permitting communications, and emails/texts—documents that legally belong to the public.

An official records request for "all communication and financials from Crown Castle to the County from 2019 to date" was submitted in July 2024. The county then closed the request in January 2025 claiming they have "provided all they could" which was, in fact, only the permit and plan of the one tower in question (no financials or communication).

Mayor Cava was alerted to the issue and she graciously assigned staff to assist; yet, still today, no documents have been located by this staff either.

Despite official requests, the county continues to block access, leaving constituents in the dark about who is benefiting financially and why public oversight is being circumvented.

This lack of transparency speaks volumes. It raises major red flags around trust and suggests a deeper problem beneath the surface of this tower rollout.

No Safety Reports Required—A Dangerous Oversight & A Conflict of Interest

Even more concerning, the county accepts $170,000 from Crown Castle to expedite these 5G small cell tower permits. In addition, the county does not require radiofrequency (RF) safety reports as part of the 5G tower application process—despite federal expectations of local authority being the first line of defense in ensuring RF safety for any tower permitted in their municipality. These reports are supposed to verify that the towers meet basic safety standards for human exposure to radiation.

This raises serious concern…is there a financial conflict of interest in the permitting department?

The Report Crown Castle Didn't Want You to See

Radio Frequency Compliance Reports are encouraged to be shared in good faith with any resident who requests it. Yet, after nearly eight months of requesting the Radio Frequency Compliance Report from the county and Crown Castle, the FCC had to intervene and get the document from Crown Castle – this is highly unlikely.

What was found was alarming:

The report made assumptions about the tower configuration that didn't match what was built in the official engineering plans. It referenced a generic "scenario" but not the actual tower. It failed to account for the tilt and height actually used. Finally, all those mismatched details were input by Crown Castle, with no 3rd party verification.

Now, numerous Kendall homeowners are putting in for these public records to see if this is an isolated issue or a systemic problem in the permitting department who accepts $170,000 from Crown Castle to expedite these small cell permits.

In any other regulatory space, such errors would prompt an immediate investigation. But in the race to digitize everything, even safety checks are being sacrificed.

Residents deserve to know:

- How much money Crown Castle is paying the county—and where that money is going
- Why safety reports are not required for 5G tower approvals. This is not preempted by the state law, in case anyone tries to tell you it is.
- Whether elected officials are aware of the discrepancies in radio frequency documents

Miami is not a testing ground for corporate shortcuts.

My children are not tradeoffs in the race to 5G or infrastructure dollars.

This is our home—and we have a right to protect it.