



San Francisco Proposed Cell Phone Radiation Disclosure Legislation

The proposed legislation would require retailers to post the amount of radiation emitted by each cell phone sold in their store.

Cell Phone Radiation

Cell phones are increasingly important tools of communication. The number of users is on the rise, and children comprise a growing segment of this population. All cell phones emit radio frequency radiation from the antenna of the device as the device seeks to make a connection with a cell tower. This radiation is emitted in all directions, and is absorbed by the brain or the body depending on where the phone is being held. The measure of radiation is called the Specific Absorption Rate, or SAR, and not all cell phones emit the same amounts of radiation. There is no way to predict which phones emit more or less radiation.



1.58 W/Kg

VS.



0.57 W/Kg

There is no way to predict which phones have lower SAR values.

What Does the Science Say?

Recently published peer-reviewed scientific studies suggest that long-term heavy use of cell phones for periods of time over 10 years can lead to an increased incidence of brain and salivary gland tumors, as well as other health problems. There are also studies that report cell phones pose 'no risk' to human health, but these studies typically look at very short periods of cell phone use. Diseases such as brain and salivary gland cancer take a long time to develop, so short term studies are not likely to show significant incidence of these diseases.

With the growing number of people using cell phones as their primary means of tele-communication, reports of any negative effects are expected to increase. Of further concern is that younger and younger children are using cell phones for an increasing number of hours per day. Children tend to be more at risk than adults due to their thinner and thus more penetrable skulls, and their still-developing brains and bodies. The research pointing to potential health effects is significant enough to justify, at the very least, making the information on radiation levels available to the public. Simply put, the public has the right to know how much radiofrequency radiation each phone emits, and San Francisco wants to work with retailers to make that information available.



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SFEnvironment.org/cellphoneradiation
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