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Concerns Rise Over Safety Of Wireless Internet

Some European Towns And Schools Are Even Restricting WiFi Services Until Health Studies Are Done

Despite some [recent setbacks](#) in major U.S. cities, Wireless internet continues its steady march of expansion across the world, offering convenience and easy accessibility to many. But it isn't just porn, scams and unlawful file sharing that has some officials worried about the technology. Some public health advocates are concerned because the safety of wireless internet itself has not yet been thoroughly measured.

True, WiFi generates weaker electromagnetic fields than cell phones held up to the head or living below high tension [power lines](#) would produce. It is those fields, called emfs, that have been implicated in cancer and other problems at high doses. The tricky part is teasing out risk for long-term exposure to low doses, as is the case with an increasingly wired world.

As the [International Herald Tribune](#) reports, the European Environmental Agency has recently issued a statement urging caution on deployment of new wireless networks. The agency will be watching closely the results of a World Health Organization study that is evaluating cellphone use by nearly 7,000 brain tumor patients in 13 countries.

Europeans are well known in environmental circles for their precautionary approach when it comes to perceived threats, and it's no different when it comes to WiFi. British teacher associations have called for further research on the technology, pointing out that children are known to be the most susceptible to damage from electromagnetic fields. In the German city of Frankfurt, school officials decided not to install wireless systems until there is more health research. The French Health Ministry ordered up a review of data on the subject.

In the midst of such uncertainty, what are consumers to think? Perhaps the most sensible advice is to limit exposure to electromagnetic fields where readily possible, such as avoiding massive power lines, and not standing in front of the microwave when it's on. Turn off and unplug unused electronics. And keep up political pressure to make sure the proper studies get done, and the results released to the public without industry tampering.

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[Cell Phones, Power Lines Raise Cancer, Brain Damage Risk](#)

[“We Don’t Want Our Children To Be A Long-Term Experiment”: Parent Opposing Antennas On Cancer Risk](#)

[People Living Near Power Lines Up To Five Times More Likely To Develop Cancer: Study](#)