



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 29, 2019

Citizens Concerned Over Health Risks of 5G; Science Not Settled

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5G antennas are [popping up](#) all across the United States, and a significant number of people are growing increasingly concerned over the long-term health effects of the high-speed communications technology.

Unfortunately, it appears as though their trepidations are falling on deaf ears.



5G technology is alluring in that it offers download speeds up to 30 times faster than 4G. It is touted as the technology necessary for self-driving vehicles. Gaia.com elaborates,

The difference between 4G and 5G in terms of gigahertz, the unit of alternating current (AC) or electromagnetic (EM) waves that affect the transmission speeds of devices, is significant. 5G technology promises radio millimeter bands in the 30 to 300 GHz range, while 4G tops out at around 6GHz. When applied to video latency, this translates to speeds up to 60 to 120 times faster.

Lawmakers are [anxious](#) to see the new technology rolled out in their cities. CBS News reports Sacramento was one of the first cities in the nation to launch 5G under the leadership of Mayor Darrell Steinberg in 2017, but residents have voiced concerns over the public safety of the new technology.

Sacramento parents Aaron and Hannah McMahon, who have two young daughters, told CBS they had a 5G cell antenna on a pole just outside of their home. According to Aaron, experts have told him that his family is virtually “living in a microwave” with the tower so close to their residence.

“It’s scary, it’s a hard situation to be in,” Hannah McMahon said. “They can’t tell me that something that’s fairly new, and relatively untested, is not gonna be harmful in 10-15 years.”

And the McMahons are not alone. Homeowners in cities throughout the country are leading petitions to stop 5G construction in their neighborhoods, citing public health fears.

In an effort to assuage concerns, Sacramento commissioned an independent study on the safety of the 5G towers led by University of California Davis Professor Jerrold Bushberg.

Bushberg claims the towers emit “very low levels of exposure” and therefore do not pose a health threat. He adds the FCC sets guidelines for exposure to cell signals, and the exposure from the 5G antennas is well within the safe level.

But skeptical Americans do not necessarily find relief in that assessment. After all, the Food and Drug Administration frequently [approves](#) drugs later proven to cause serious long-term health consequences.

It’s worth noting the former chair of the FCC, Tom Wheeler, who was behind the big push for 5G technology, was also the former head of the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association (CTIA),



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the vast telecoms lobby group. Current FCC Chairman Ajit Pai is also a proponent of 5G technology, and has even [dismissed](#) claims that the technology could interfere with weather observations, despite the studies in support of those observations. Pai has close ties to the telecommunications industry as a former Verizon lawyer. Is there a possible conflict of interest there?

While Dr. Bushberg could be completely correct in his assessment of 5G, the science is anything but settled. More than 200 scientists in more than 40 countries have [warned](#) about 5G's health risks and have asked the European Union to follow "Resolution 1815 of the Council of Europe" — which asks the Council of Europe to take all measures to reduce exposure to electromagnetic fields and create an independent task force to reassess the health risks of the exposure. Those scientists declared in the "5G Appeal" to the EU:

We, the undersigned scientists, recommend a moratorium on the roll-out of the fifth generation, 5G, until potential hazards for human health and the environment have been fully investigated by scientists independent from industry. 5G will substantially increase exposure to radio frequency electromagnetic fields (RF-EMF) ... and has been proven to be harmful for humans and the environment.

They explain that because the technology is poorly transmitted through solid materials, it will require new antennas nearly every 10 to 12 houses in urban areas, significantly increasing EMF exposure. According to opponents of 5G, some potential effects of this exposure can include cancer, genetic damages, reproductive issues, cognitive and neurological disorders, to name just a few.

The National Toxicology Program (NTP) [conducted](#) a \$25 million U.S. study and found a significant increase in the incidence of brain and heart cancer in animals exposed to EMF below the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines followed by most nations and significantly lower than the levels created by 5G technology.

Dr. Ron Powell is a retired U.S. Government physicist who has worked with this technology in the military, and has been an outspoken [critic](#) of 5G technology. He has claimed it "would irradiate everyone, including the most vulnerable to harm from radiofrequency radiation: pregnant women, unborn children, young children ... the elderly, the disabled, and the chronically ill.... It would set a goal of irradiating all environments."

While 5G has certainly not been "proven" to be harmful to the general population, since it is just now being implemented, it appears that concerns over 5G's health risks are not unfounded. But what has been Sacramento's response to concerned citizens such as the McMahons? It will make sure the FCC rules are followed and the cells are aesthetically pleasing, CBS Sacramento [reports](#).

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