

Pylons 'double child cancer risk'

Children living under high-voltage power lines could run double the risk of getting cancer, new research reportedly suggests.

Those living within 100 metres of the cables are more likely to suffer from leukaemia, the study indicates.

The Childhood Cancer Research Group at Oxford University studied 70,000 children under 15 for the Department of Health report, half of whom had cancer.

The seven-year study is reported in the Times and the Independent newspapers.



The study looked high-voltage cables near children's homes

The research looked at the prevalence of high-voltage power cables near children's homes.

'Surprising' results

Children born or living near the power lines were 1.7 times more likely to contract leukaemia than those in the control group, the research found.

Some studies have already shown an association between some types of electromagnetic fields and increased childhood leukaemia.

Research author Dr Gerald Draper said other research suggested power lines might account for 20 to 30 of 500 cases of childhood leukaemia each year.

But, he said, his work indicated a far smaller number of cases were affected.

The findings were "surprising" and prompted further research, he added.

The Department of Health said it would not comment on the findings until Dr Draper submitted his final report.