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Green Party demands federal action on cell phones and wireless networks

OTTAWA - Green Party leader Elizabeth May today called on Health Minister Tony Clement to issue an immediate warning on the potential danger posed by radiation from cell phones and wireless networks in Canada.

Germany recently warned its citizens to avoid wireless technology whenever possible and the EU's European Environment Agency (EEA) followed suit with a call for immediate reduction in exposure to radiation from phones and wireless networks. The EEA suggested that a delay could precipitate a health crisis similar to those caused by asbestos exposure and smoking.

"There is growing scientific evidence that exposure to electromagnetic radiation (EMR) from cell phones and wireless networks can cause significant harm to people, especially children," said Ms. May. "Until all the facts are in, it is foolish to turn a blind eye to the potential health effects of EMR. The Green Party urges the federal government to apply the precautionary principle and warn citizens of these risks now."

Citing several studies that link cell phone use to cancer, the Green Party's Health Promotion critic, Jake Cole, demanded rapid action from Mr. Clement.

"More and more Canadians are being exposed to EMR through wireless networks at work and at home," said Mr. Cole. "The long-term effects of exposure aren't known with certainty, but evidence suggests that health impacts can occur at extremely low levels of radiation, far below public safety limits."

"Canada must quickly issue some sensible public warnings on this matter, following the lead of other jurisdictions like Germany and the EU, and develop principles and regulations to ensure the health and safety of Canadians."

In accordance with the precautionary principle, the Green Party recommends:

- Children under the age of 12 should not use cell phones, except in emergencies.
- Cell phones should not be used in schools, except in emergencies.
- A moratorium on the installation of all wireless equipment and cell phone masts within 300 metres of a home or school
- Turning off all electronic equipment when not in use

To read A Rationale for a Biologically-based Public Exposure Standard for Electromagnetic Fields (ELF and RF), the international scientific review on wireless radiation and health cited by the European Environment Agency, please see <http://www.bioinitiative.org/report/index.htm>