

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D. C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	ET Docket No. 13-84
)	
Reassessment of Federal Communications)	
Commission Radiofrequency Exposure Limits and)	
Policies)	
)	
Proposed Changes in the Commission’s Rules)	ET Docket No. 03-137
Regarding Human Exposure to Radiofrequency)	
Electromagnetic Fields)	
)	

To: Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554

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The Town of Hillsborough, California submits these comments in connection with ET Docket No. 13-84 and ET Docket No. 03-137, now pending before the Federal Communications Commission (the “Commission” or “FCC”).

INTRODUCTION

Hillsborough is a small town of 11,000 residents located between San Francisco and Silicon Valley. It is a residential community with no commercial zone. Despite its proximity to San Francisco, the Town retains its rural character, with stately homes and open space. Because of its location, the needs of its residents, and other factors, the Town has been called on to support a significant number of wireless communications facilities (“WCFs”).

Hillsborough’s residents are well-educated and participatory. For many years, they have vocally opposed the efforts of providers to increase WCFs within the Town. For the past 15

years, matters relating to WCFs have drawn more residents to City Council meetings than any other. At these meetings, the primary concern of the residents has been the effects of radio frequency ("RF") emissions. Even though the City Council has been clear with residents that the issue of RF emissions and their effect on health has been preempted, the Council cannot ignore the deeply-held concerns of its residents on this important point.

Hearing residents' concerns, the City Council enacted a WCF ordinance (Hillsborough Municipal Code Chapter 15.32) that encourages providers to locate their facilities in areas owned by the Town (such as water tank sites) and away from residences, to the extent possible. Now, most of the large cell phone antenna towers have been moved to these sites. While coverage is not perfect, a reasonable balance has been struck between the providers' needs and the residents' desire that equipment that generates RF emissions be located far away from their homes.

But growing demands for more and better service has led providers to return with proposals for new WCFs, including, recently, Distributed Antenna System ("DAS") equipment to be located close by residences. This new technology and other developments have led the City Council to consider revisions to its WCF ordinance.

During the past 12 months, the City Council has held a series of public meetings with providers and residents to get input for a revised ordinance. Participation by residents has been strong and vocal. Their primary concern, again, has been the impact of RF emissions on health. A second concern has been the continuing proliferation of new infrastructure that is inconsistent with Hillsborough's rural setting.

Hillsborough does not have the financial resources or staff expertise to conduct an independent study of the health risks of RF emissions. The Town and its residents must rely on the FCC and its expertise to set standards and procedures that will provide reliable, unquestioned protection for all. Given the importance of these issues to Hillsborough and its residents, it is imperative that the standards, rules, and procedures adopted through this proceeding be in clear English, understandable to the citizens who will be affected by them.

COMMENTS

Based on the testimony of concerned residents and the views of City Council members expressed at the public meetings noted above, Hillsborough submits the following comments and requests:

1. Lack of Uniform Standards

Several residents have noted that RF emissions standards in the United States are far higher than standards in effect in other countries. For example, one resident noted that the American standard allows 1,000 times more RF emissions than in some European countries and 200 times more than in Australia.

The Commission should explain, in clear language, why the standards being adopted in these proceedings are so far out of alignment with the more stringent standards in other countries.

2. Health Risks Associated With RF Emissions

Residents testified about known and suspected links between RF emissions and multiple health conditions, including various cancers, leukemia, lymphoma, auto-immune disorders, neurological changes, decreased memory and attention in children, headaches, and hypertension in adult males. Residents have noted that definitive studies have not been performed to evaluate the effects of long-term exposure to RF emissions.

It would be beneficial to have the Commission confirm, in a straightforward manner, that each of these potential health risks (and any others that have been identified in reputable scientific literature) have been evaluated and that the Commission has determined, with reasonable scientific certainty, that the permitted RF emissions will not cause or aggravate these health conditions.

More, the Commission should issue an unambiguous statement that the standards proposed will not have a cognizable effect on humans under any circumstances, with appropriate citation to the scientific studies relied on by the Commission in giving this assurance. Residents

must feel confident that the government agency that has preempted local authority on this issue is certain that its actions fully protect them.

3. Evaluation of Effects on At-Risk Populations

Many residents have expressed specific concerns about the effect on vulnerable populations, including children, the infirm, and the elderly. The Commission should consider whether to have more stringent standards for emissions from facilities located near schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and similar facilities, where vulnerable populations may be exposed for many hours each day.

The Commission also should consider whether to establish exclusion zones that would preclude locating WCF equipment within a defined distance of these institutions. In view of the dearth of long-term studies, it would be preferable to limit exposure for children, the elderly, and other vulnerable residents.

4. Standards for Collocated Facilities

Hillsborough has made significant progress in having multiple carriers establish their WCF transmitters at two sites that are relatively isolated from residences. However, aggregating the transmitters raises concerns about the cumulative effect of RF emissions. Hillsborough, like most other cities, does not have the ability to independently evaluate the cumulative impact of multiple transmitters in a single location.

The Commission should develop an easy-to-use form, similar to the one in Appendix A of the current edition of the FCC publication "A Local Official's Guide to Transmitting Antenna RF Emission Safety: Rules, Procedures and Practical Guidance" to assist local governments in assessing the effect of collocated multiple transmitters. Demonstration of compliance should entail an evaluation of all collocated transmitters.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

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