

# **BioInitiative Report:**

## **A Rationale for a Biologically-based Public Exposure Standard for Electromagnetic Fields (ELF and RF)**

### **WHAT IS THE BIOINITIATIVE REPORT?**

The BioInitiative Report is an internationally acclaimed scientific and public health report on potential health risks of electromagnetic fields and radiofrequency/microwave radiation.

In 2007, the BioInitiative Working Group, an international collaboration of prestigious scientists and public health experts from Columbia University and the University at Albany (New York), University of Washington (Seattle), the Karolinska Institute, Umea University and Orebro University Hospital (Sweden), the European Environmental Agency (Denmark) Medical University of Vienna (Austria) and Zhejiang University School of Medicine, (China) released a 650-page report citing more than 2000 studies that document health effects of EMFs from all sources.

The BioInitiative Report was produced for publication to the broadest possible audience, hence placed on the Web. Much of the BioInitiative Report content, including updated chapters and new chapters is now published in the journal *Pathophysiology* (August 2009).

Chronic exposure to EMF is associated in some scientific studies with increased health risks that vary from impaired learning, headaches, mental confusion, skin rashes, tinnitus and disorientation to a variety of cancers, and neurological diseases like ALS and Alzheimer's. Sources of concern may include but are not limited to power lines, cell and cordless phones, cell towers, WI-FI, WiMax and wireless internet.

The European Parliament and its member countries unanimously adopted a resolution in 2009 to address public health risks from EMF and wireless technologies, in line with the BioInitiative Report. The European Environmental Agency director has given high visibility to the issue and recommended health agencies review and act to implement precautionary measures, particularly for children. The Report has been highly praised around the world by public health experts. It has been presented to the EU Director of Public Health, the EEA and EEAC expert committees, to more than a dozen Prime Ministers and Ministers of Health around the world from Europe to Brazil to Taiwan, and at the scientific conferences convened at the Royal Society of London in 2007 and 2008. It has provided a basis for precautionary advice and actions limiting cell and wireless exposures in France, Belgium, Liechtenstein, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Finland, among other countries of the world. Courts in Belgium and France have directed the use of the BioInitiative Report recommendations limiting wireless emissions around new cell towers, as a judicial basis for removal of existing cell towers, and to prevent construction of new cell towers near schools and pre-schools. It is also provided a public health basis for new international recommendations to limit cell phone use, and to prohibit use of cell phones by children, and ban advertising of them to children in France.

Cindy Sage, MA and David Carpenter, MD, Director, Center for Health and the Environment, University at Albany, New York were co-editors, and were contributing authors to the Report.