March 31, 2014

The Honourable James Moore
Minister of Industry
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0H5

Dear Minister Moore,

I am writing with regard to the new regulations proposed CPC-2-0-03.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit my comments concerning Industry Canada’s cell tower siting policy. My life has been very affected by the regulations up until the present. I will include how at the end of this letter.

These are the changes to the siting protocols which I know will benefit all Canadians.

1. Municipalities need to be able to have final say on where and if cell towers/antennas will be placed in their own communities.
2. Any additional cell antenna or increases in power from cell towers/antenna need to be open to public notification and consultation. Again, municipalities need to have final say about any additions or power increases.
3. Cell panels on top of buildings need to be opened up to public notification and consultation, as these are the only sites not required to do so at present. As well, cell panels on top of buildings should require 100% approval of any occupants living within these buildings (this is now required by Germany for condo buildings).
4. If any persons living near a cell tower/antenna are reported to have become ill from exposure to that tower/antenna, that cell tower/antenna must be turned off immediately.
5. Since animals cannot thermally regulate themselves in the same way people can (this was sited by James McNamee of Health Canada in his answer to question 138 during the ongoing Quebec cell tower court case, White v. Ville de Chateauguay), and Safety Code 6 does not protect wildlife; then any Provincial or National Parks, Conservations areas and areas of ecological significance need to be protected from any exposures to microwave emissions. Concern for harm to wildlife by microwave radiation exposure has been raised in the United States last month by their Department of the Interior. This important submission can be seen on the NTIA website at the below link:
   http://www.ntia.doc.gov/files/ntia/us_doi_comments.pdf (The NTIA is the Executive Branch agency that is principally responsible for advising the President on telecommunications and information policy issues.)

   I would like as well to include my own comments based on my personal experience over the past 3½ years of dealing with emissions from cell towers and from the advocacy I do now to help others.
Three and a half years ago I became ill from exposure to a TV/radio tower and two cell towers placed behind my home. After a six month search of Southern Ontario, I had to move up to the forest just south of Grand Bend, Ontario to try and recover and lessen any further exposure to microwave radiation. As there were already four cell towers in the town, I hoped that there would be no further need for any future ones. I also had the Pinery Park as a place I could go outside, to be in nature and exercise, as this is a huge problem for me in more exposed areas. During my first few months in Grand Bend, I stepped down from my position as Captain on the Airbus at Air Canada; giving up my 22 year flying career. I could no longer work in the now denser wireless environment onboard the aircraft, in the terminals and in the hotels I needed to stay in for work.

Since then a large cell tower was allowed by Industry Canada to be placed in the forest where I live in Grand Bend. This cell tower was built there against Municipal distance setbacks, public outcry and protest, on the historical site for the town and finally on ecologically protected land with many endangered and species at risk. Industry Canada at the time even waved public notification and consultation because they were able to say that an old support for two TV satellite reception-only dishes was good enough to be considered as an existing cell tower; allowing the project to go ahead as a rebuild without any public knowledge or discussion.

This tower projects its emissions well inside the Pinery Provincial Park very near to my home. Recently, without any public notification or consultation telecom went ahead and added even more cell panels onto a Rogers towers on Greenway road, further adding even more microwave radiation into the Park. From the Industry Canada Geographical Spectrum Search, it looks like they were authorized only 4 days ago. Nobody in our Municipality is aware of this, but with proper public notification this wouldn’t happen.

At the south end of the Park is the smaller town of Port Franks. They too had a cell tower built last year that went against the wishes of the Municipality and the vast majority of the town, and again on ecologically protected land with many endangered and species at risk. Frank Clegg from the Canadians for Safe Technology (and former President of Microsoft Canada) and I even went to talk to Lou Battison and John Baggio from Industry Canada together to ask them to let Port Franks become a White Zone (where there are less/no microwave radiation emissions) and they told us they would block any attempts made to do this; even if that is what the residents and Municipality want.

For the reasons above, this is why it is so important that Municipalities have control over where and if these cell towers are. As wildlife is not protected at all by Safety Code 6, it is also important in areas like these across Canada that are ecologically protected, that such wildlife is not exposed to any microwave emissions.

As a woman who is now severely sensitive to microwave radiation, I and so many others like myself need to have a place to live that is protected from microwave emissions. Canada is a very large country and there has to be some way that having such an area can be made legally possible. Right now I am living at the whim of the cellular tower companies and your Industry Canada. I cannot own land because of this or protect myself from further harm. Health Canada may not be recognizing my electrosensitivity yet, but my doctors and insurance company are.
Five months ago I had to start leaving my home for two weeks of every month to go and live in the radio quiet zone in West Virginia. The relief and time to heal there are the only way I am able to function in my home in Grand Bend for any time. However being more functional for a limited amount of time does not mean being comfortable or well. Even with this reprieve, I still cannot tolerate being in my home. I have no idea of where to go now. I need the shelter of a large forest to absorb radiation that is away from cell towers and this was the only area like this in Southern Ontario.

This radio free zone in West Virginia is a large cell tower free area that is the size of the State of Maryland. As I am not American I cannot live there full time, as well as I have family responsibilities that make it impossible for me to leave Canada, and even Ontario. If such a zone can exist in the States, it is more than possible to have the same thing exist in Canada. Emergency service is still provided, and internet and communications still exist.

The reason for the 4th point of my letter is that there is no mechanism to protect people who are reacting to these cell towers. Since the two cell towers mentioned above were turned on, at least 30 people have come to me reporting new symptoms of electrosensitivity with about ¼ of these new cases being severe. One of the people with a severe form of ES also developed life-threatening cancer that was determined to have started during the same short exposure period after the tower was turned on. There was also a new brain cancer case that started about 2 months after one of the new towers was turned on. As well are cancers that came out of remission or spread immediately after the new cell tower went live. There are also brain cancer clusters, one ovarian cancer cluster and other cancer deaths around long standing cell towers in our area. Almost all of these were residents who were living within a few hundred meters of the cell towers.

There has to be some way for these towers which are causing problems for people to be turned off. There is nowhere for people to move to now to get away from them and it’s not fair to make people who are now sick to not only go through treatment for disease but to also have to relocate at the same time.

I know the health aspects are outside the scope of Industry Canada to fix, but these concerns need to be considered by Industry Canada before allowing any more wireless infrastructure to be installed. Giving Municipalities final authority will correct most of the problem and should be seen as an exceptionally positive action to be granted.

I am more than happy to talk to anyone seriously at Industry Canada regarding realistic solutions for the siting protocol.

Thank you for your time,

Melissa Chalmers

Grand Bend, Ontario