

Local resident continuing fight against cell tower, 4G technology

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

With the growing world of technology, we don't think about the harms and concerns it can have on us.

Veronica Gallacher has been endlessly researching and putting together information to create awareness around cell tower dangers, particularly focusing on the proximity of these structures to school facilities and residents' homes.

It all began when signs were going up in Gallacher's village of Southfields, indicating the approaching installation of multiple antennas on lampposts in close distance to a daycare and children's indoor playground. She was appalled that they could put such technology close to children, whom are more susceptible to the dangers of electromagnetic radiation and that no one was paying attention.

She decided to do something about it and took it to the Town.

When Gallacher called the Town last April to express her concerns she was informed that the tower, due to its size, fell within the parameters to be fast-tracked. Parameters based on aesthetics alone with no regard for safety. The fast-track system does not require public discussion for installation.

Gallacher then put on a presentation for the Region of Peel Council on Oct 25, to share her concerns and research about the damage cell towers can have.

"Canada's safety codes are among the worst in the world, with countries like Russia and Italy having exposure limits 100 times safer than Canada," explained Gallacher in her presentation. "Safety Code 6 hasn't had any major revisions since the late 80's, before cell phones were even popular."

5G technology is expected to come through at some point in 2020, but Gallacher is concerned due to the lack of understanding of the 4G that we have now and the harms it already has, it will progressively get worse when 5G comes into play.

"There is no public discussion on the topic since it fell within the fast-track parameters. Parameters that consider the aesthetics of a tower alone," states Gallacher. "So as long as a tower meets the height criteria and other physical characteristics then it can be approved through the fast-track system without any concerns for safety or public discussion."

Multiple studies done in numerous countries have demonstrated harm caused by electromagnetic radiation from cell phones, cell towers and WiFi. Pregnant women and children are the most vulnerable to harm from these technologies.

Gallacher was unable to attain the reassurance she sought so decided to do her own research.

"I became further convinced of cell tower dangers after reading several non-industry funded studies that demonstrated harm. Such as a 2004 German study, which found that cancer rates quadruple for those living within 400 meters of a cell tower or antenna," explains Gallacher during her presentation.

She added, "An Australian study found that children living near TV or FM Broadcast Towers developed leukemia at three times the rate of kids living over seven miles away."

"As Region of Peel residents, we should have some say in where cell towers are placed," states Gallacher. "Some residents are already experiencing negative health effects due to the smart meter attached to their homes. Imagine what a cell tower placed outside one's door could do?"