# Validation from NRPB

**At last, the end of an era of denial.** We have been pushing for this admission for 15 years now! **Powerlines CAN cause cancer and other illnesses.** A short version is on the front page of the Sunday Times on 4th March 2001. Further details are below. Useful key References are given at the bottom of this document.

On Monday March 5th, a German study will be announced in the March 1st issue of the International Journal of Cancer that will show an **increased risk of 3.21 (95% CI 1.33 - 7.8) of childhood leukaemia in children exposed to elevated power-frequency magnetic fields at night-time**. We have long asked that night-time exposure be separated out from daytime exposure, as it is at night that critical growth and repair processes take place.

On Tuesday March 6th, the **NRPB's Doll Report Mk II (ELF Fields and the Risk of Cancer) will be released in London**. For the first time they will admit an association of increased risk of childhood leukaemia with elevated magnetic fields. Genuine media may apply for an invitation by phoning the NRPB on 01253 822 744. Interviews with Sir Richard Doll and Sir Walter Bodmer can be pre-arranged by talking to Dr Michael Clark on 01235 822 737. Copies of the new Report will be available at the Press Conference.

Although Prof Henshaw (et al)'s work has been published for a couple of years now, Sir Richard Doll's NRPB Advisory Group has never questioned him about his work. This seems odd for a group whose role is to advise on the importance of all new EMF related health research. You would have thought that they would have invited him to give a presentation and then given him a very hard viva-voce cross examination about the details of his work and hypothesis. How can they form a rightful judgement any other way?

We ask: *"Is it a coincidence that the UKCCS Electric Field paper has been delayed by over 6 months so that it comes out AFTER this Doll Report Mk II ?"* We await the results from this electric field study with great interest.

**Dramatic new assessments of ill health near to high-voltage powerlines by Professor Denis Henshaw of Bristol University**. These were given in February as 'advice to UK Government' and will be available on his web site from Monday 5th March. He predicts excess cases of:

**2 - 8 cases of childhood leukaemia caused by overnight magnetic field exposure above 0.3 microtesla**

This estimate is mainly based on people living within 50 metres of 132 kV lines and above, but fields this high can be found up to a couple of hundred metres from the highest power lines, and are also caused by 33 kV, 11 kV and even 240/415 volt local overhead lines. People living within about 500 metres of overhead high voltage lines are also exposed to Corona Ion effects which cause toxic aerosols to get electrically charged and become more dangerous. We also find areas of the country where unseen and uncorrected underground electricity distribution cables cause fields greatly in excess of 0.3 microtesla (uT). About 300,000 people in the UK live in residential magnetic fields from external power lines of all sorts exceeding 0.3 uT. The only way to know is to have your fields measured (by your electricity supplier) or hire a meter from Powerwatch (£35/week) with instructions and measure them yourself.

**14 extra cases of skin cancer**

These are based on a risk assessment based on increased skin exposure to radon radioactive decay products and other carcinogenic agents via the 50 Hz oscillation of these particles within

about 50 metres of high-voltage overhead power lines.

**250-400 extra cases of lung cancer and a few thousand other illnesses associated with air pollution**
Risk assessment based on increased exposure to air pollution via corona ion effects.

**60 extra suicides and a causative factor in many tens of thousands of cases of clinical depression**
Considered biologically plausible via magnetic field exposure with an apparent low threshold of 0.1 microtesla. 40% excess in suicide first found in the West Midlands and published in 1981 (!!!!) but not admitted by the NRPB. Increase in depressive illness that may be VERY widespread ~ a 2 to 3 fold increase found in severe clinical depression, and a 2 to 3.6 fold increase in suicide among electric utility workers.

**For over five years**, some multinational companies (including the World Bank) have been specifying low levels of power frequency magnetic fields (less than 0.2 microtesla, uT) for their new building designs.

**A Swiss Ordinance (ORNI)** that came into force on 1st February 2000 sets the maximum magnetic field from electricity supply installations at 1 uT. It requires the owners of such installations to arrange conductors and equipment in order to minimise magnetic fields that extent into work or living areas of property.

**A document on EMF bio-effects** from the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, known as Tamino proposals, was discussed by the European Commission. A version was then passed by the European Parliament in plenary [10.03.99 item 19] but rejected by the Council of Ministers as too costly to implement. Proposals included one to limit ambient of power-frequency flux to about 0.2 microtesla.

Since about 1995 there have been a series of peer-reviewed scientific papers from different laboratories showing a significant inhibition of Tamoxifen's oncostatic function when the ambient power-frequency magnetic flux is 1.2 uT or higher. **TAMOXIFEN IS ONE OF THE MOST WIDELY USED DRUGS TO TREAT BREAST CANCER**. Although these findings have not yet been incorporated into any legislation, from a Health & Safety viewpoint it does give a valid cause for concern in the workplace.

**The SwissRe 1996 publication "Electrosmog ~ a phantom Risk"** should also be consulted as an indication of insurance industry thinking in these matters. In 1998 a working group of the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences classified power frequency EMFs as a "probable human carcinogen" in the same category as DDT, although the final printed 1999 NIEHS report was weaker.

**We are regularly called in** to track down the causes of high magnetic fields in offices. Not only are these likely to cause direct health problems, but over about 0.8 uT they cause computer screens to flicker or shimmer. It is illegal, under the EU and UK Display Screen Regulations, for workers to use such computer displays. The causes include faults in internal building wiring and EMFs from local electricity substations and underground distribution cables. Eastern Electricity (now 24-7) and have recently been very positive about helping solve these problems, but Southern Electricity claim ignorance about the problem and have not been co-operative to date. We are currently involved in a dispute with East Midlands Electricity over very high (over 25 uT) fields from an old substation of theirs that are polluting a neighbouring office. They have refused to co-operate in installing shielding to reduce the severe problem, a very anti-social attitude.

**We also know of several schools that had high fields** (over 1 uT) due to internal wiring problems. I feel that power-frequency magnetic field measurements (which are easy to do) should be a regular part of maintenance inspections. This is not a reason to panic, but there is not good reason for ambient magnetic fields in buildings to exceed 0.1 uT. However, a precautionary approach is urgently needed.

**Maureen Asbury (Trentham Campaign Group, p10 Sunday Times printed edition) may be contacted today (Sunday) on 01782 658 648 (UK)**
**To find out further information you can call the Electromagnetic Hazard & Therapy premium rate helpline anytime on 0906 401 0237 *(£1.50 / minute)***

**UK Department of Health meeting (9th February 2001) launched £7m microwave related research fund. Preliminary outline applications to be in by 31st March 2001.**

Previous NEWS archived today.
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**Childhood leukaemia, air pollution and parental exposure**

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**Increased exposure to air pollution near powerlines**

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