NTP Paper on DNA Breaks Delayed, Will Be Included in Final RF Report

Peer Reviewers Had Sought More Information; Cell Phone-Cancer Report Due in December

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The National Toxicology Program (NTP) has changed course and will not —at least for the time being— publish its findings of increased DNA breaks among rats exposed to cell phone radiation as a stand-alone paper.

The DNA study, which is part of NTP's landmark experiment showing that RF radiation can lead to tumors in the brains and hearts of laboratory animals, will now be incorporated in NTP's Technical Report on the $25 million project, the NTP has told *Microwave News*.

The target date for releasing this final report is in December, said Christine Bruske Flowers, the director of the Office of Communications and Public Liaison at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). The NIEHS in Research Triangle Park, NC, is the institutional home of the NTP.

The report will offer a "final determination" on the level of evidence for carcinogenic activity of cell phone radiation, according to the statement released by Flowers's office.

A paper with the DNA results was withdrawn after peer reviewers asked for more information on how they fit in with the other findings of the NTP study, the statement explained. The reviewers also wanted more details on the exposure system. (The full text of the statement appears below.)

The NTP's previously disclosed findings of more DNA breaks in male rats than in female rats, as well as more breaks among rats than mice, appeared to be consistent with the higher tumor counts

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seen in the brains of the male rats. These results provide “strong evidence for the genotoxicity of cell phone radiation,” Ron Melnick told us last September (see “NTP: Cell Phone RF Breaks DNA.”) Melnick led the team that designed the study; he is now retired, though he still works as a consultant.

The NTP released partial findings of its cell phone-animal study last May after *Microwave News* revealed its unexpected results. The RF project is the most expensive experiment ever undertaken by the NTP.

Details of the NTP exposure system, which allowed the animals to roam freely instead of being restrained during RF exposure, was designed and built at the IT’IS Foundation in Zurich. A description of the system was published more than a decade ago; a shorter version was presented at a conference in 2008.

Here is the full text of the NTP statement on the status of the DNA breaks paper:

> ”The genotoxicity paper was not accepted for stand-alone publication because the reviewers wanted additional detailed technical information on the methods used to expose the animals to radiofrequency radiation, as well as further placement of these findings in the context of the results of the two-year rodent studies. The complete results from all the rat and mice cancer studies remain in pathology review and the final determinations on the level of evidence for carcinogenic activity have not yet been made. For these reasons the decision was made to peer review and publish the genotoxicity data as part of the larger study in an NTP Technical Report.”

NTP, NIEHS, DNA breaks, RF animal studies, brain cell phones, Ron Melnick, comet assay,

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