

The Israeli Government bans marketing Wi-Fi devices for the home as a precautionary measure.

The Environment Minister said that "the health consideration is before any economic consideration, and we have no intention to compromise on this subject".

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Translation by Iris Atzmon:

<http://www.nrg.co.il/online/16/ART1/917/492.html>

The communication and environment ministries have banned the cellular companies from marketing phones in the house and internet connection that are based on cellular modem, because of the radiation concern.

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By Aviv Lavie

The cellular companies will have to conceal the plans to become an important factor in the field of communication in the house. The communication ministry executive and the environmental ministry executive summarized that the companies will receive an order to stop marketing the wired phones and the internet connection that are based on cellular wireless modem.

Cellcom, which led the new field, already removed from its website the advertisements for these products. The companies Bezeq and other companies that operate house services that are based on wired communication are the big profit makers from this.

The story began 3 months ago, when the head of radiation arm in the environment ministry, Dr. Stelian Galberg, watched an advertisement for house communication systems of the cellular companies that started being sold without anyone informing him. Galberg was afraid that if these systems succeed in penetrating, there would be a need to erect thousands of new antennas in order to enable them to operate and the radiation quantity will increase a lot. The reason for that is that in the house the system operates as a wired line like Bezeq systems but outside the house they receive the communication from the cellular antenna.

In the Environment ministry [they] approached to the communication ministry, and claimed that the law of non ionizing radiation enforces to act according to the precautionary principle, meaning expose a person to radiation only when it's justified. "When a person travels in his car and wants to talk on the phone he has no choice but do it with antennas", Galberg told to Business, "but when we are talking on the phone in the house, it can be done with wired communication".

The radiation levels will increase significantly.

In the first stages, the communication ministry did not take a stand and enabled the cellular companies widen the marketing of the home systems, but in a meeting between the two executives of the ministries, the representatives of the communication ministry admitted that the only justification for the service is the technological neutrality principle, according to which, the communication ministry will offer to the public many technologies and they will choose according to their will the most suitable service.

In contrast, the environment ministry team clarified that the service will increase significantly the radiation levels to which the public is exposed "with no justification". In view of these things, it was agreed to order the cellular companies to stop immediately the marketing of home systems.

"The law forces us to act according to the precautionary principle" Galberg said yesterday. "When we transfer the guideline to the cellular companies, if some company will continue to market wireless systems it will be against the law. We will enable them to do it only where there is no wired communication, like in isolated houses that are disconnected to Bezeq lines."

The question is what lessons will be learnt from this development. Dr Galberg said "we discussed the lessons and the first thing we told them is 'next time ask us first'. They didn't receive it with love, but definitely with understanding". The cellular companies said that "the subject is being examined". The minister of environment said that "the health consideration is before any economic consideration, and we have no intention to compromise on this subject".