

Smart Meters – General Information

Smart meters, like similar devices such as wireless Ethernet routers, cell phones and cordless phones, communicate by using the electromagnetic spectrum, which is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), not the Florida Department of Health.

The FCC protects public health by limiting the maximum amount of radiofrequency (RF) radiation which the devices can produce. These limits were coordinated with, and are supported by, federal agencies with health and safety responsibilities, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

The FCC's limits are based on safety standards published by the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP, Report 86), and by the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Inc. (IEEE, C95.1 standard). There is also a similar safety standard developed by the International Commission on Nonionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), used in many countries outside the United States.

To develop their RF safety standards, these organizations of scientists and engineers first examined thousands of studies published over several decades in the peer-reviewed, scientific literature. The organizations used that body of evidence to determine which adverse health effects are possible from RF exposure, and at what specific exposure levels the effects begin to occur. After determining these effects levels, the organizations set the maximum recommended exposure limits well below (10 times or more) the level where the health effects begin to occur, as an extra margin of safety.

As new studies are performed and the body of scientific literature continues to grow, these groups continue to review the new studies against the weight of the existing literature, to see if the existing standards need to be changed. However, recent reviews by most scientific/governmental organizations have found the evidence insufficient to recommend changing the current standards. See for example, the Vermont Department of Health's smart meter report, and the major RF safety report from the United Kingdom's Health Protection Agency (links to both are found below).

To contact the FCC or learn more about RF safety, you can visit this FCC web site:
www.fcc.gov/oet/rfsafety

References:

http://healthvermont.gov/pubs/ph_assessments/radio_frequency_radiation_and_health_smart_meters.pdf (Vermont Smart Meter report)

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/NewsCentre/NationalPressReleases/2012PressReleases/120426Mobilephones/> (UK Report Press Release)

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1317133826368 (The complete UK report, very long and technical in spots, but see the summary and conclusions; see also the smart meter exposure section on page 55 which references the conclusions of three other US reports on the meters)