

ORDINANCE NO. 7,404-N.S.

REQUIRING NOTICE CONCERNING RADIO FREQUENCY EXPOSURE OF CELL PHONES; ADDING BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 9.96

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 9.96 is added to the Berkeley Municipal Code to read as follows:

CHAPTER 9.96

REQUIRING NOTICE CONCERNING RADIO FREQUENCY EXPOSURE OF CELL PHONES

Section

- 9.96.010 Findings and Purpose**
- 9.96.020 Definitions**
- 9.96.030 Required notice**
- 9.96.040 Violation – remedies**

Section 9.96.010 Findings and Purpose

- A. Requirements for the testing of cell phones were established by the federal government in 1996.
- B. These requirements established “Specific Absorption Rates” (SAR) for cell phones.
- C. The protocols for testing the SAR for cell phones carried on a person’s body assumed that they would be carried a small distance away from the body, e.g., in a holster or belt clip, which was the common practice at that time. Testing of cell phones under these protocols has generally been conducted based on an assumed separation of 10-15 millimeters.
- D. To protect the safety of their consumers, manufacturers recommend that their cell phones be carried away from the body, or be used in conjunction with hands-free devices.
- E. Consumers are not generally aware of these safety recommendations.
- F. Currently, it is much more common for cell phones to be carried in pockets or other locations rather than holsters or belt clips, resulting in much smaller separation distances than the safety recommendations specify.
- G. Some consumers may change their behavior to better protect themselves and their children if they were aware of these safety recommendations.

H. While the disclosures and warnings that accompany cell phones generally advise consumers not to wear them against their bodies, e.g., in pockets, waistbands, etc., these disclosures and warnings are often buried in fine print, are not written in easily understood language, or are accessible only by looking for the information on the device itself.

I. The purpose of this Chapter is to assure that consumers have the information they need to make their own choices about the extent and nature of their exposure to radio frequency radiation.

Section 9.96.020 Definitions

For the purposes of this Chapter, the following terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context requires otherwise.

A. "Cell phone" means a portable wireless telephone device that is designed to send or receive transmissions through a cellular radiotelephone service, as defined in Section 22.99 of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations. A cell phone does not include a wireless telephone device that is integrated into the electrical architecture of a motor vehicle.

B. "Cell phone retailer" means any person or entity that sells or leases, or offers to sell or lease, Cell phones to the public, where the sale or lease occurs within the City of Berkeley, including Formula cell phone retailers. "Cell phone retailer" shall not include: (1) anyone selling or leasing Cell phones over the telephone, by mail, or over the internet; or (2) anyone selling or leasing Cell phones directly to the public at a convention, trade show, or conference, or otherwise selling or leasing Cell phones directly to the public within the City of Berkeley on fewer than 10 days in a year.

C. "Formula cell phone retailer" means a Cell phone retailer that sells or leases cell phones to the public, or which offers Cell phones for sale or lease, through a retail sales establishment located in the City of Berkeley that, along with eleven or more other retail sales establishments located in the United States, maintains two or more of the following features: a standardized array of merchandise; a standardized facade; a standardized decor and color scheme; a uniform apparel; standardized signage; or, a trademark or service mark.

Section 9.96.030 Required notice

A. A Cell phone retailer shall provide to each customer who buys or leases a Cell phone a notice containing the following language:

The City of Berkeley requires that you be provided the following notice:

To assure safety, the Federal Government requires that cell phones meet radio frequency (RF) exposure guidelines. If you carry or use your phone in a pants or shirt pocket or tucked into a bra when the phone is ON and connected to a wireless network, you may exceed the federal guidelines for exposure to RF radiation. This potential risk is greater for children.

Refer to the instructions in your phone or user manual for information about how to use your phone safely.

B. The notice required by this Section shall either be provided to each customer who buys or leases a Cell phone or shall be prominently displayed at any point of sale where Cell phones are purchased or leased. If provided to the customer, the notice shall include the City's logo, shall be printed on paper that is no less than 5 inches by 8 inches in size, and shall be printed in no smaller than a 18-point font. The paper on which the notice is printed may contain other information in the discretion of the Cell phone retailer, as long as that information is distinct from the notice language required by subdivision (A) of this Section. If prominently displayed at a point of sale, the notice shall include the City's logo, be printed on a poster no less than 8 ½ by 11 inches in size, and shall be printed in no small than a 28-point font. The City shall make its logo available to be incorporated in such notices.

C. A Cell phone retailer that believes the notice language required by subdivision (A) of this Section is not factually applicable to a Cell phone model that retailer offers for sale or lease may request permission to not provide the notice required by this Section in connection with sales or leases of that model of Cell phone. Such permission shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Section 9.96.040 Violation – remedies

A. Each individual Cell phone that is sold or leased contrary to the provisions of this Chapter shall constitute a separate violation.

B. Remedies for violation of this Chapter shall be limited to citations under Chapter 1.28.

Section 2. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of Old City Hall, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within fifteen days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

At a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Berkeley held on May 12, 2015, this Ordinance was passed to print and ordered published by posting by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Droste, Maio, Moore, Wengraf, Worthington and Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

