

# *ASCIP RISK ALERT!*

***Date:***                ***July 11, 2013***

***Attention:***        ***ASCIP Members***

***Subject:***            ***Concerns about WiFi Exposure***

Several ASCIP districts have been approached by parents concerned with the use of “WiFi”<sup>11</sup> (wireless local area networks) in schools and the possible impact on human health. Wireless networks use radio waves to transmit information between wired access points and wireless devices such as laptops, tablets, printers, and projectors. Through this document, ASCIP aims to provide member districts with background information on this issue and protocols with regards to WiFi installation within your schools.

A review of current scientific literature on this topic indicates that numerous government agencies and scientific bodies around the world are completing studies on radio frequencies (RF) and possible health implications. As with any evolving controversial topic, there are numerous conflicting theories and non-scientific positions. However, based on current available research, there is insufficient scientific evidence which demonstrates known adverse health effects with the use of wireless products that operate in compliance with international RF safety standards.

Currently, exposure limits for RF have been established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Additionally, several non-governmental organizations, including the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), the International Electromagnetic Fields Alliance (IEMFA), and the BioInitiative Report (2007 & 2012), have also established guidelines and recommendations for exposure limits to RF. Collectively, these organizations provide guidelines and recommendations that should be considered as they represent the latest scientific studies and may represent the most current health hazard opinion.

ASCIP is also familiar with Los Angeles Unified School District’s (LAUSD) extensive study and survey of its RF in typical classroom settings. The results of the LAUSD study found that RF levels from its WiFi were substantially below recommended levels and in turn, allowed them to establish an internal precautionary RF threshold level which is 10,000 times lower than the FCC limits. The survey results obtained by LAUSD appear to be consistent with other public agency findings that RF levels are substantially lower than FCC recommended limits. LAUSD continues to conduct studies and are monitoring this issue.

On the basis of this information, if a District is considering installation, or has already installed WiFi in its schools, ASCIP recommends the following actions:

- Continue to evaluate ongoing WiFi research and apply that information to the District’s programs as appropriate.
- Continue to monitor this issue and re-evaluate when the FCC or other United States regulators promulgates a standard that is below the existing FCC Maximum Permissible Exposure Limits for general population.
- Continue to use devices that conform to the FCC requirements and IEEE 802.11 Standard (and subsequent revisions) and devices approved for home and office by the FCC or subsequent United

States regulators. Districts should reassess protocols periodically and as new information becomes available.

- Continue to install WiFi devices in accordance with manufacturer specifications.

In order for districts to be prepared to address parental concerns regarding the use of WiFi in schools, ASCIP recommends the following:

- The District utilizes equipment that is FCC approved.
- The District's WiFi conforms to and operates in accordance with IEEE 802.11.
- The District's IT staff or consultants are aware of the WiFi concerns and that they continue to monitor industry trends with regards to changes in regulatory requirements.

ASCIP also recommends that the District consult with Legal Counsel for any issues or responses involving the media or potential litigation.

Please contact ASCIP staff at 562-404-8029 should you have any questions or need additional assistance.

**Internet References:**

- FCC (U.S. Federal Communications Commission) Website:  
<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/radio-frequency-safety>
- FCC Office of Engineering and Technology (OET) Bulletin 56- Questions and Answers about Biological Effects and Potential Hazards of Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields  
[http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Engineering\\_Technology/Documents/bulletins/oet56/oet56e4.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Engineering_Technology/Documents/bulletins/oet56/oet56e4.pdf)
- BioInitiative 2012-A Rationale for Biologically-based Public Exposure Standards for Electromagnetic Fields  
<http://www.BioInitiative.org/>
- LAUSD Fact Sheet- Radiofrequency Exposure  
[http://www.lausd-oehs.org/docs/Misc/Radiofrequency\\_Safety\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_021113a.pdf](http://www.lausd-oehs.org/docs/Misc/Radiofrequency_Safety_Fact_Sheet_021113a.pdf)
- Health Physics Society  
<http://hps.org/hpspublications/articles/wirelessnetworks.html>

<sup>[1]</sup> Not to be confused with Wi-Fi™ a trademark of Wi-Fi Alliance and a brand name certifying that a device or other product is compatible with a set of broadband wireless networking standards.