



18 juillet 2006

Court delivers blow against mobile masts

Ruling cites public health risk

Ten mobile telephone antennas, eight of which are in Athens, must be removed as they pose a threat to public health, the Athens Appeals Court ruled yesterday.

The ruling rebuffs an appeal by an unidentified mobile operator for the suspension of a decision by the National Telecommunications and Post Commission ([EETT](#))* to remove the poles.

In justifying its ruling, the court cited **"urgent concerns regarding the protection of public health."**

All 10 antennas in question had been hidden in chimneys, electric boilers and other appliances to thwart residents and authorities. Eight of the 10 antennas are located on top of apartment blocks in districts of Athens including Halandri, Vyronas, Ilioupolis and Kallithea. The other two are located at the airports of Iraklion, in Crete, and Kos. Only one of the antennas, in Kallithea, had been operating with a license but it will also be taken down.

"It is not only one (mobile phone) company that is to blame here," EETT Vice President Nikos Koulouris told Kathimerini. **"The unlicensed erection of antennas is common practice. EETT has also decided to take down antennas put there by other companies,"** he said, adding that the commission usually finds out about illegal antennas through residents' complaints.

"We refuse to become the guinea pigs of (mobile) firms," Nikos Krassakis, a member of the Sepolia committee lobbying for the removal of antennas told Kathimerini**. **"Our main concern is not whether the antennas are legal or not but how much of a threat they are to our health."**

Krassakis said his group's protests had led to the removal of two antennas and the decision to stop the erection of a third.

"(The ruling) is a very positive decision, a blow against the unaccountability of (mobile) firms, but is not enough. We need a more collective approach," Loukas Margaritis, a professor at Athens University, told Kathimerini**. **"Scientifically, there is no doubt that radioactivity is a health risk, even within the limits imposed by legislation,"** he said. He added that a solution would be to relocate the antennas to the outskirts of towns, and set them at much higher levels to lessen the impact of emissions.

* [EETT](#) is the National Regulatory Authority, which supervises and regulates the telecommunications as well as the postal services market. EETT's supervising and regulatory role was further enforced by Act 2867/2000.

** Vice President National Telecommunications and Post Commission (EETT)