

Cell Sites and Property Values

REAL ESTATE APPRAISALS SHOW PRESENCE OF NEARBY CELL SITES DOES NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT PROPERTY VALUES¹

- *"Cellular phone towers do not have a measurable or identifiable impact on residential property values."*
- **The Valuation Group, Inc.** in a study conducted for Twin Cities 13-County Metropolitan Area, Minnesota and Western Minnesota, January 2007
- *"Not a single example was found to support the test hypothesis that property values decline after the installation of a Wi-Fi or wireless antenna."*
- **Tarantello and Associates** in a study of numerous properties and communities in southern California, April 2008
- *"There is no diminution in the value of homes with a view of a telecommunications facility."*
- **Lane Appraisals, Inc.** in a study of Airmont, New York, May 2006

Growing demand for wireless service creates the need to add wireless communications facilities in residential neighborhoods. While there has been public concern about the impact these sites may have on property values, to date there is no convincing evidence that there is any adverse effect. T-Mobile recognizes that maintaining property values in the vicinity of a new site is of critical concern to homeowners. We carefully consider the needs of local communities when selecting new cell site locations as we strive to meet your needs for reliable service.

Importance of reliable wireless coverage to customers

Cell sites need to be located where people use their cell phones, and people increasingly use them at home and throughout their neighborhoods for personal communications, commerce, business communications, and more. In fact, recent studies indicate that more than half of all cell phone calls are made from homes. What's more, according to a study from The Nielsen Company, more than 20 million U.S. households (17 percent) do not have landlines and rely solely on mobile phones.²

Dependable wireless service is critical to personal and public safety

Another reason wireless networks need to provide reliable coverage and handle high capacity is because both people in distress and emergency responders now rely on cell phones in times of emergency.

- The National Emergency Number Association (NEMA) estimates that more than half the emergency 9-1-1 calls in the U.S. today are made from cell phones.³
- Per Pew Research, 74 percent of Americans who own mobile phones said they have used their handheld devices in an emergency and gained valuable help.⁴

Questions about wireless and home values

Some homeowners have questions about whether the presence of new cell sites affects their ability to sell their homes. One issue is whether there are undesirable health effects from living or working near a tower. The Federal Communications Commission and independent organizations like the American Cancer Society and World Health Organization consistently say there is no evidence that exposure to the low level of RF signals emitted by cell sites poses a health risk.

Another issue is the assumption that new towers may degrade views or otherwise be unsightly. Wireless carriers are sensitive to the needs of each community and work to reduce the visual impact of a cell site on the local community through design elements like camouflage and landscaping. In addition, T-Mobile is committed to minimizing the need for new freestanding structures, and roughly two-thirds of our wireless facilities are built on existing structures, such as local government buildings, rooftops, and utility poles.



¹Property value studies conducted across the U.S. for T-Mobile by independent appraisers with no vested interest in the results. ²The Nielsen Company: "Twenty Million U.S. Telephone Households are Wireless-Only," 09/16/08. ³National Emergency Number Association: "Wireless 9-1-1 Overview." ⁴Pew Research Center's Pew Internet & American Life Project, the Associated Press and AOL: "Cell Phone Society," 04/04/06.



How wireless availability can enhance neighborhoods

Real estate professionals continually tell us that reliable wireless coverage is of significant value to homeowners. Many buyers test the wireless signal of a prospective home as they walk to the front door, and most won't consider a home without reliable coverage. This anecdotal information is reinforced by an article published in the professional journal of the Appraisal Institute. In looking at real estate appraisals conducted in the northeast U.S., the article states, "The advantages afforded by telecommunication facilities more often than not outweigh any negative effects." The conclusion is that wireless communication service "enhances local communication, education, productivity, work efficiency efforts, and public safety services and security."⁵

Increased wireless usage drives need for expanded wireless network

Clearly, the availability of reliable wireless service has become a "must-have" for new homes and neighborhoods. In order to accommodate the increasing call and data volume, as well as avoid unreliable coverage, wireless carriers must add sites to wireless networks in local areas. Independent appraisers across the country have analyzed the potential impact new sites might have on local property values. These studies demonstrate that having a cell site nearby does not diminish property values.

LEARN MORE

Please visit www.t-mobile-takeaction.com for additional information about wireless communications.

CONTACT US

If you have questions on the information provided in this fact sheet, please contact natextaffairs@t-mobile.com.

⁵Thomas S. Andolfo, "The Wireless Personal Communications Services (PCS) Industry," *The Appraisal Journal*, July 2001, referencing appraisal findings for Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

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