

# Danger alert on phone masts

SCIENTISTS believe they have proved for the first time that radiation from mobile phone masts affects brain waves and can seriously damage health.

Dr Gerd Oberfeld, an Austrian environmental medicine expert from the regional government in Salzburg who led a state-funded study, called on politicians to take the effects of mobile phone radiation more seriously.

He said: "Politicians have to take more notice of this issue and finally take action. There are serious consequences for the population's health and society as a whole that are simply unacceptable."

The study was carried out with assistance from scientists from the Christian Doppler Clinic and the University of Salzburg.

Twelve volunteers, nine women and three men aged between 20 and 78, took part in Dr Oberfeld's research

By **Michael Leidig**

that recorded brain waves using an electroencephalogram (EEG) while the volunteers were exposed to mobile telephone mast radiation.

The volunteers were put in a room fitted with special radiation-isolation curtains situated near a mobile telephone transmission mast.

They were seated in comfortable chairs with their backs turned to the window.

All outside stimulations were reduced to an absolute minimum by the use of blind-folds and ear protectors in order to provide maximum quality EEG readings.

The isolation curtain reduced the radiation in the room to 26 microwatts per square meter. Without

telling the test persons, the scientists then raised the protective curtain which gradually increased the levels of radiation to 3,327 microwatts.

The curtain was then once again lowered until radiation had fallen back to 26 microwatts.

Dr Oberfeld claims the study provides the first proof that it is not just mobile phones themselves that are dangerous but also the transmission masts.

He said: "The results are strikingly clear, radiation of GSM 900/1800/1800 transmission masts causes significant changes in EEG parameters from a distance of about 80 metres. The brain waves of the volunteers definitely changed when the curtain was lifted. Outside

influences that cause reactions in the biological system are described as external stressors.

"In cases of frequent exposure or great intensity they can lead to a decrease in quality of life and working ability as well as damage to general health."

Dr Oberfeld called for a more responsible attitude towards technology in future. He added that the results of his study are to be published in international medical and science journals.

The results of the study have been dismissed by the mobile phone industry.

Thomas Barmueller, from the non-profit organisation Forum Mobilkommunikation (FMK), which represents Austrian network providers and mobile phone producers said: "The experiment was not certified by an independent party and the results were announced without the original study being published in full length."

**'Frequent exposure can lead to a decrease in quality of life'**