

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

3



From: sarahaminoff@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 3, 2025 12:53 PM
To: sbcob; Laura Capps; Roy Lee; Joan Hartmann; Cory Bantilan; Supervisor Nelson; Steve Lavagnino; Eleanor Gartner
Cc: KATE KHEEL; Julie Levine; Patricia Burke
Subject: Please vote NO, ABSTAIN or PAUSE the vote on SB Wireless Ordinance
Attachments: letter to Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors.docx

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

February 3, 2025

Dear Santa Barbara Supervisors:

Please vote **NO, ABSTAIN or PAUSE** the vote on the Wireless Ordinance and work with Attorney Julian Gresser. <https://www.bbilan.org/blog/2025-01-24-bbilan-letter-to-santa-barbara-county-board-of-supervisors>

Please read Dr. Kent Chamberlain's recent letter submitted to the Board before the hearing.

We urge the Supervisors to not remove important protections such as notification, hearings, setbacks and environmental protection for wireless, especially given the fire risk. **California has already suffered devastating fire losses due to telecom equipment electrical or mechanical failure.**

“Four major fires in Southern California 2007–2020 were caused (or contributed to) by telecom equipment. Collectively, these fires killed 5 people, injured dozens of others (including firefighters), and led to well more than \$6 billion in damages:

- Guejito Fire (2007) in San Diego (which merged into the Witch Creek Fire)
- Malibu Canyon Fire (2007)
- Woolsey Fire (2018)
- Silverado Fire in Irvine (2020).

California continues **drought years** which sets us up for even more severe deadly wildfire seasons. “Imagine a cell tower fire in a neighborhood or next to a school amidst a high wind event? These fires cannot be extinguished through conventional means. Cell towers should NOT be placed near homes, day care centers, or schools for this simple reason —people need time to escape from a fire,” see [fire safety brochure](#).

Why Santa Barbara’s Telecommunication Ordinance is UNSAFE - 20 foot setbacks for “small cell” antennas is unreasonable and hazardous, with NO time to escape in the event of a fire. Exemptions for coastal or environmental review (CEQA) ignore safety for Santa Barbara.

The FCC states that safety belongs to the municipalities to regulate, and Santa Barbara's constituents require the following safety policies: CEQA, NEPA, environmental laws and coastal hearing reviews, liability insurance for harm and death, reasonable and safe setbacks, pre-mailed notification within 1500 feet of proposed telecom facilities and adopting Malibu's Fire Safety Protocol.

- There is currently no monitoring of radiation of cell towers, so we have no idea if the radiation will exceed the FCC's outdated and obsolete exposure limits. Given neither the FCC, carriers or installers will be monitoring in Santa Barbara, who will be liable for harm?

Santa Barbara has the ability to restore local government discretion on antenna location, so property owners can cooperate with authorities to zone cell towers far from bedrooms, classrooms and parks to further reduce fire risk.

- Prioritize WIRED broadband connection

Constituents deserve to not lose their home. A small cell or cell tower adjacent to a home can reduce property values by 20% and 90% of buyers will avoid purchasing such a home.

1. The fires in Los Angeles City and County have shown California and the world that we are dealing with a climate crisis, with impossible conditions under which to fight fire.
2. Santa Barbara County must do everything in their power to prevent fires from starting, including cell towers and associated equipment electrical fires. Amidst Santa Ana conditions, cell tower fires can grow exponentially in a matter of seconds.
3. We are imploring Santa Barbara County to implement Malibu's Fire Safety Protocol for electrical engineering rigor, and the federally required APCO ANSI for structural engineering rigor to help prevent fires in the first place.
4. We want a setback from all properties of at least 300 feet in urban settings and up to 1500 feet in rural settings. It takes longer to cut the grid in rural settings and that gives the fire more time to spread and makes it harder for residents to escape.

Thank you for taking action for the good of ALL residents and wildlife in California!

Sincerely,

Sarah Aminoff, Patricia Burke, Kate Kheel, Safe Tech International

www.safetechinternational.org

Julie Levine, FiberfirstLA

<https://www.fiberfirstla.org/>

February 3, 2025

sbcob@countyofsb.org, lcapps@countyofsb.org, roylee@countyofsb.org, jhartmann@countyofsb.org, cory.bantilan@countyofsb.org,
Nelson@bos.countyofsb.org, steve.lavagnino@countyofsb.org, egartner@countyofsb.org,

Dear Santa Barbara Supervisors:

Please vote NO, ABSTAIN or PAUSE the vote on the Wireless Ordinance and work with Attorney Julian Gresser. <https://www.bbilan.org/blog/2025-01-24-bbilan-letter-to-santa-barbara-county-board-of-supervisors>

Please read Dr. Kent Chamberlain's recent letter submitted to the Board before the hearing.

We urge the Supervisors to not remove important protections such as notification, hearings,, setbacks and environmental protection for wireless, especially given the fire risk. **California has already suffered devastating fire losses due to telecom equipment electrical or mechanical failure.**

“Four major fires in Southern California 2007–2020 were caused (or contributed to) by telecom equipment. Collectively, these fires killed 5 people, injured dozens of others (including firefighters), and led to well more than \$6 billion in damages:

- Guejito Fire (2007) in San Diego (which merged into the Witch Creek Fire)
- Malibu Canyon Fire (2007)
- Woolsey Fire (2018)
- Silverado Fire in Irvine (2020).

California continues **drought years** which sets us up for even more severe deadly wildfire seasons. “Imagine a cell tower fire in a neighborhood or next to a school amidst a high wind event? These fires cannot be extinguished through conventional means. Cell towers should NOT be placed near homes, day care centers, or schools for this simple reason —people need time to escape from a fire,” see [fire safety brochure](#).

Why Santa Barbara’s Telecommunication Ordinance is UNSAFE - 20 foot setbacks for “small cell” antennas is unreasonable and hazardous, with NO time to escape in the event of a fire. Exemptions for coastal or environmental review (CEQA) ignore safety for Santa Barbara.

The FCC states that safety belongs to the municipalities to regulate, and Santa Barbara’s constituents require the following safety policies: CEQA, NEPA, environmental laws and coastal hearing reviews, liability insurance for harm and death, reasonable and safe setbacks, pre-mailed notification within 1500 feet of proposed telecom facilities and adopting Malibu’s Fire Safety Protocol.

- There is currently no monitoring of radiation of cell towers, so we have no idea if the radiation will exceed the FCC's outdated and obsolete exposure limits. Given neither the FCC, carriers or installers will be monitoring in Santa Barbara, who will be liable for harm?

Santa Barbara has the ability to restore local government discretion on antenna location, so property owners can cooperate with authorities to zone cell towers far from bedrooms, classrooms and parks to further reduce fire risk.

- Prioritize WIRED broadband connection

Constituents deserve to not lose their home. A small cell or cell tower adjacent to a home can reduce property values by 20% and 90% of buyers will avoid purchasing such a home.

1. The fires in Los Angeles City and County have shown California and the world that we are dealing with a climate crisis, with impossible conditions under which to fight fire.
2. Santa Barbara County must do everything in their power to prevent fires from starting, including cell towers and associated equipment electrical fires. Amidst Santa Ana conditions, cell tower fires can grow exponentially in a matter of seconds.
3. We are imploring Santa Barbara County to implement Malibu's Fire Safety Protocol for electrical engineering rigor, and the federally required APCO ANSI for structural engineering rigor to help prevent fires in the first place.
4. We want a setback from all properties of at least 300 feet in urban settings and up to 1500 feet in rural settings. It takes longer to cut the grid in rural settings and that gives the fire more time to spread and makes it harder for residents to escape.

Thank you for taking action for the good of ALL residents and wildlife in California!

Sincerely,

Sarah Aminoff, Patricia Burke, Kate Kheel, Safe Tech International
www.safetechinternational.org

Julie Levine, FiberfirstLA
<https://www.fiberfirstla.org/>