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That is hardly reassurance for residents worried about the possible health effects of cellular phone towers. In addition, residents point out that, despite assurances that the towers can be made to blend into surroundings — unlike the older style, ugly lattice towers — their presence will lower property values and become a potential danger for kids who might play on them.

Murphy said, contrary to what residents may think, his company won't fight them to build a tower in their neighborhood and has no legal basis as long as they vote against it.

"If they say they don't want us, we say goodbye," he said. "That's it."

### Decision has a price

But that decision has a price because although the communications giant can, and will, build towers elsewhere, cellular customers may not have as reliable service.

"That not only hurts cellular phone users, but others, he said.

"A high percentage of 9-1-1 (emergency) callers are from cellular phones," Murphy said.

"I witnessed a series of accidents (in March) in the Farmington Hills area," said Wendy Kosma, a former Novi resident and Realtor. "I was the first caller in

two of them. And now that I have one, I don't know what I'd do without it for my business."

She's not alone. Business of various kinds find the cellular phone almost a necessity.

"I resisted using one initially," said Bob Heinrich, president of Metrobank in Farmington Hills. "I thought of it as a nuisance, as if I'd be on a leash."

But au contraire, says Heinrich, who has had a phone in his car for three years.

"I can be so much more efficient now and keep in touch with people," he said.

In the law enforcement field, the uses of cellular phones are even more varied and have become an intimate part of how police operate.

"I can make the analogy of the PREP (portable police) radio," said Farmington Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer. "When they first were introduced, officers were reluctant to use them. Now you can't find anyone who would go out without one."

### Phones provide eyes

Dwyer said his department uses them in liquor stings, undercover work, drug busts, gambling raids, and in the most recent case, a prostitution ring bust. But the big payoff from cellular phones is not from officers.



Hearing him out: Brian Rich meets opposition from Heritage Hills residents as he says a good word about Cellular One's offer.

"It's providing us with more eyes and ears," Dwyer said. "It's really benefiting law enforcement."

Callers have tipped police off to drunk drivers, auto accidents and even shootings by using cellular phones, he said.

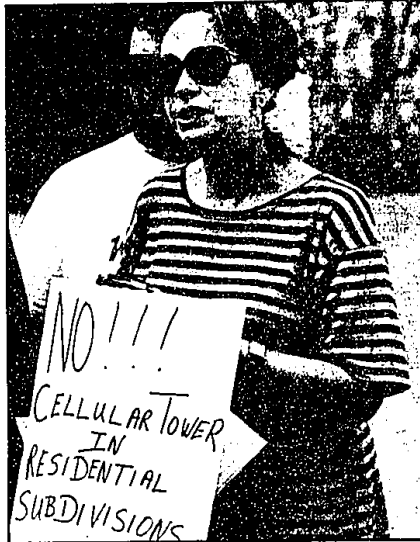
Firefighters, emergency medical professionals, utility workers and others also benefit from them.

"A lot of the resources we used in the incident involving (dangerous) chemicals in the basement (at a Farmington Hills residence) were called in right from the scene," said Lt. Mike Carr of the Hills Fire Department. "We've used them during storms and

other emergencies when radio traffic is heavy. You can go into more detail (on a cellular phone) than you can on a radio, where transmissions are supposed to be brief."

And many of the residents who don't want to see the towers in their neighborhood readily admit that they see the benefit.

Those residents opposed to a tower being built in their neighborhood mostly agree that the phones are here to stay. But until someone can prove to them that there is no health danger, those towers will have to go somewhere else.



STAFF PHOTOS BY ANI HEALTY

That's her opinion: Marci vanCreveld's sign states her opinion of Cellular One's proposal to place a communications tower in her subdivision.

**Farmington Observer**  
 (525) 817-8400  
 Published every Monday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Main, Farmington, MI 48305. Second class postage paid at Farmington, MI. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Observer & Eccentric, Newspaper B-1, 805 E. Main, Farmington, MI 48305. Telephone 525-8110.  
 SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One year in Oakland County \$36.00; One year in Michigan \$36.00; One year in U.S. \$42.00; All other countries \$54.00.  
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