

Colloquium honoring Prof. Dr. Dr. Karl Brinkmann



During this year's annual meeting of the Bioelectromagnetics Society (BEMS) in Munich on June 15th 2000 a colloquium honoring Prof. Dr. Dr. Karl Brinkmann took place. The intention was to acknowledge and to appreciate his life achievements after 28 years of work for the Forschungsverbund (research association) „Electromagnetic compatibility of biological systems“.

Karl Brinkmann, born on April 30th 1911, studied electrical engineering at the Technical University of Braunschweig. In 1941 he did his doctorate at the Institute for High-Voltage Engineering in the care of Prof. Marx. In 1952 Karl Brinkmann qualified as a university lecturer at the same university. In the early seventies Karl Brinkmann as general director of the Central Direction of Siemens AG Berlin was commissioned to construct a 380 kV line. In connection with this task he was confronted with the issue of possible health hazards caused by this line.

Based upon his new responsibilities in 1972 Brinkmann initiated the research association „Electromagnetic compatibility of biological systems“ aimed to explore biological effects of electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields. Right from the start Brinkmann directed and coordinated a multi-disciplinary team of scientists coming from more than 20 institutes of different German universities. Thus, Karl Brinkmann is one of the pioneers in Germany in establishing the new research subject of „electromagnetic environmental compatibility“.

Now, 28 years later, Karl Brinkmann and the research association can look back on a successful work period. More than 100 publications in national and international scientific journals and the participation in many international symposiums and meetings give evidence of the extraordinary performance of the research association and its director, Prof. Dr. Karl

Brinkmann. The numerous scientific results found by the research association were the basis for the development of limit values and security regulations. As electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields are part of our daily life, Brinkmann's research activities are, now as well as then, of great public relevance.

The encomium was made by Dr. Rudolf Fitzner of the Klinikum Benjamin-Franklin of the Freie Universität Berlin. He spoke about Brinkmann's life achievements and his commitment to the research association „Electromagnetic compatibility of biological systems“.

Following the encomium several scientific lectures on the topic of electromagnetic environmental compatibility were presented. Prof. Dr. Dertinger gave a survey of studies on cell cultures regarding effects of magnetic fields and interference currents. Dr. Rainer Meyer of the Physiological Institute at the University of Bonn talked about the impact of low and high frequency fields on calcium homeostasis of different cell types. Dr. Fitzner and Prof. Dr. Tauber reported on growth behaviour of human leukemia cells. The paper of Dr. Joachim Schüz dealt with epidemiological studies on electromagnetic fields and leukemia. Finally, Dipl.-Ing. Grigat talked about measurement techniques of epidemiological studies. Following the lectures Karl Brinkmann addressed the plenum to express his thanks before accepting the congratulations of his colleagues.