

# Dutch data watchdog blasts Google data collection

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(AP) -- The Dutch data protection watchdog criticized Google on Tuesday for collecting data on private wireless networks, ordering it to contact 3.6 million Dutch WiFi owners and offer them a way to have their data deleted.

The Dutch Data Protection Agency (DPA) slammed Google's Street View service for collecting personal data from unencrypted WiFi networks, a practice Google has halted and apologized for.

Peter Fleischer, Google's Global Privacy Counsel, said in a statement that the company never inspected or used the data.

"Our priority has always been to delete this data, and we have now done so with the DPA's permission," he said.

But the bureau said Google's current use of WiFi locations still amounts to gathering personal information. Google spokesman Mark Jansen denied that, saying that it can't identify people from their WiFi alone.

Jansen said Google was studying the Dutch decision. The company has three months to comply, appeal or face escalating fines.

Last month, France's privacy watchdog fined Google euro100,000 (\$143,000) for improperly gathering and storing data for its [Street View](#) application, which allows [Internet users](#) to virtually tour locations on a map at ground level.

The fine sanctioned Google for collecting [personal data](#) from WiFi networks - including emails, web browsing histories and online banking details - from 2007 to 2010 through its roaming camera-mounted cars and bicycles.

More than 30 countries have complained about such data-gathering by [Google](#) Inc.

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