

Should I Test My Water?

If you've tested the air in your home and it is found to contain harmful levels of radon, the EPA recommends you have your water tested for radon if the water comes from a well. You can do this by contacting a state certified laboratory in your area that can test for radon in water. If your water is from a public water supplier that utilizes groundwater as the source, you can call the supplier to inquire about radon testing.

Radon in water can become an inhalation and ingestion hazard; however, research indicates there is a larger risk of developing lung cancer through inhalation of radon in the air than developing stomach cancer from drinking water that is contaminated with radon. Radon in water can become an inhalation hazard when radon is released into the air from showering and other household activities. If your water tests positive for radon, there are treatment methods that can remove radon from the water. If surface water is your drinking water source, radon generally will not be a problem.



How Can I Learn More About Radon?

Locally, if you are part of a community school, agency or interest group and would like a presentation on radon, the Logan County Department of Public Health (LCDPH) can provide an educational presentation at your request. You can reach the Logan County Department of Public Health at 217-735-2317.

Radon Resources on the Web/Contact Information:

EPA: www.epa.gov/radon/pubs

IEMA: www.state.il.us/iema/radon/availpub.asp

LCDPH: www.lcdph.org or call 217-735-2317

Brochure Information Source:

Illinois Emergency Management Agency

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

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The Silent Killer
Get The Facts



**Logan County Department
of Public Health**



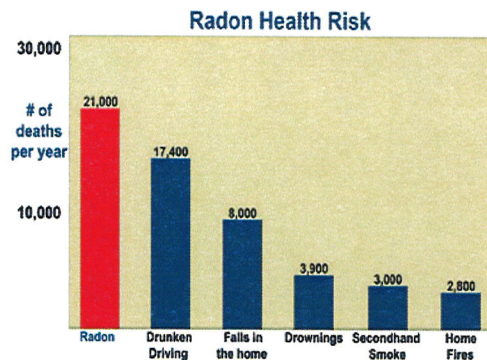
Public Health
Prevent · Promote · Protect
LOGAN COUNTY

WHAT IS RADON?

Radon is a radioactive gas which is produced from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock.

Why is Radon so Dangerous?

Radon is a cancer-causing substance and is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States (leading cause among non-smokers). In fact, it is estimated that 21,000 people die each year from lung cancer due to radon exposure. Radon usually goes undetected since it is odorless, tasteless and invisible.



Source: U.S.EPA

Once in the home, radon gas decays into radioactive particles that, when you inhale, can get trapped in your lungs. These particles, when trapped in the lungs, give off energy that can cause lung tissue damage which may lead to lung cancer.

Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop cancer and the onset of exposure and the occurrence of the disease may span many years. However, a home with a high level of radon does pose a

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greater health risk for developing lung cancer. People who smoke and live in a home with elevated radon are even more at risk.

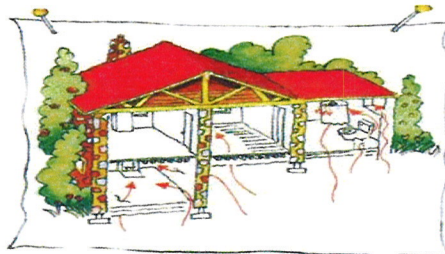
Overall, the chance of getting lung cancer depends on the level of radon that is in your home, the amount of time you spend in your home and whether you are a smoker or have ever smoked.

How Does Radon Enter Your Home?

After breaking down from uranium in the soil, radon gas can enter your home through cracks or other openings in the foundation. More specifically, radon gas can enter through cracks in floors and walls, construction joints, gaps in or around service pipes or suspended floors and cavities within walls. Radon can even enter through your water supply.

Are Certain Homes at Risk for Having Radon?

Logan County (and much of Illinois) is rated as zone 1 meaning that **Logan County is in a zone of highest potential for radon** to be found at unsafe levels. Regardless of which zone a home is located, any home has the potential to contain unsafe levels of radon. Because your neighbor's home was tested and is considered to have safe levels of radon doesn't mean your home will be safe.



How Can You Determine Your Home is Safe?

There is only one way to determine if your home is safe from radon and that is to have it tested. Fortunately testing is easy and can be done at a low cost. A variety of do-it-yourself test kits (short-term and long-term) are available through the mail, hardware stores, and other local outlets.

When testing your home for radon, it's important to follow the label instructions on the kit to ensure testing is done properly. If by preference, or if you are buying/selling a home, you can hire a qualified tester to do the job for you.

What if Radon Levels in Your Home are Unsafe?

Radon in the air is measured in "picocuries per liter of air" or "pCi/L". Although any detectable level of radon is truly not considered safe, radon levels of 4 pCi/L or greater meet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) action level (recommended level to take action).

There are several methods used to remove radon but the most common is a vent pipe system and fan which is designed to pull the radon up from below the house and vent it to the outside.

Because lowering the radon levels in the home requires technical knowledge, skills and special equipments, the person you hire must be a state licensed mitigation contractor. For a listing of Illinois licensed mitigation professionals, you can go to the IL Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) website at www.state.il.us/IEMA/radon/radon.htm.