



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DEP Urges Pennsylvanians to Test Homes for Radon

Harrisburg, PA – The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) urges Pennsylvanians to test their homes for radon in January as part of national Radon Action Month. Colorless, odorless, and radioactive, radon is a known human carcinogen and the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

The DEP website provides information and a video on [how to test your home](#), the DEP [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages are sharing daily radon tips, and a DEP [public service announcement](#) is airing on TV and radio.

Radon occurs naturally from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rocks and enters homes through cracks in the foundation or other openings.

“Because of its geology, Pennsylvania is prone to high radon levels. Radon has been detected in all 67 counties, and about 40 percent of homes have levels above the Environmental Protection Agency action level,” said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “It’s just good sense to protect yourself and your loved ones.”

The EPA action level is 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) of air. In October, a home in southern Lehigh County [showed a radon level of 6,176 pCi/L](#), the highest recorded in the state. That area is near the Reading Prong, a geological section of granite rock that’s historically generated high levels of radon.

Winter is an ideal time to test, because doors and windows are generally closed, producing the most conservative results. High levels of radon tend to be found in basements, but the gas can be found anywhere in the home.

Simple radon test kits are inexpensive and available at home improvement and hardware stores. You can also hire a qualified radon professional.

If your home has a radon level higher than 4 pCi/L, the U.S. Surgeon General and EPA recommend taking action. A professionally installed radon reduction system, using a vent pipe and exhaust fan, will help prevent the radon from entering your home and discharge it outside. Compared with the associated risk of lung cancer, these systems are very affordable, generally in the price range of other common home improvements. An added benefit: having a radon reduction system makes the future sale of your home easier.

Pennsylvania law requires all professional radon testers, mitigators and laboratories to be certified by DEP, and the department provides a [list of certified radon service providers](#). People can also obtain a hard copy or verify a company’s certification by calling 800-23RADON (800-237-2366).

If you’re building a new home, DEP recommends installing a passive radon system during construction. There is no reliable way to test the ground in advance for radon, and the cost of installing the radon system during construction should be less than installing one after the fact.

For people buying or selling a home, Pennsylvania's Real Estate Seller Disclosure Act requires sellers to disclose the results of any known radon testing. The DEP website lists [radon testing options for real estate transactions](#).

The DEP Radon Division may be contacted by email at ra-epbrpenvprt@pa.gov or by phone at **(800) 237-2366** or **(717) 783-3594**.

Make 2017 a safer, healthier year. Test your home for radon, and share this information with your friends and neighbors.

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