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/avilpub.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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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.

Radon in the air is measured in “picocuries per liter of air” or “pCi/L”. Although any detectible 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.