



Northeast District Department of Health

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PRESS RELEASE

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NDDH Encourages Homeowners to “Plan a Raid on Radon”

Health Department Offers Free Radon Test Kits for National Radon Action Month

(BROOKLYN) – The Northeast District Department of Health (NDDH) is partnering with the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) to educate residents about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to protect their families and home.

Exposure to radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers in the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that radon causes more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths in the country each year. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If you smoke and your home has radon, your risk of developing lung cancer can be much higher.

It takes many years for lung cancer to develop. Most people do not have symptoms until lung cancer is advanced and harder to treat. The good news is that lung cancer from radon is preventable, and simple steps can be taken to reduce the risk of radon exposure.

Ways to keep radon levels low:

- Increase air flow in your house by opening windows and using fans and vents to circulate air. However, natural ventilation in any type of house is only a temporary strategy to reduce radon.
- Seal cracks in floors and walls with plaster, caulk, or other materials designed for this purpose.
- You can cover the earth floor in crawl spaces with a high-density plastic sheet. A vent pipe and fan can be used to blow the radon from under the sheet and vent it to the outdoors.

NDDH is launching our “Plan a Raid on Radon” campaign. We have a limited supply of free radon test kits and educational materials for district residents. Visit the health department at 69 South Main Street in Brooklyn to receive one free radon test kit per home with instructions for use and a radon fact sheet. Participants will receive a follow-up call from Stephanie

Hynes, our Environmental Health Specialist, within two weeks to ensure the kit was used and returned to the manufacturer according to instructions for analysis.

Radon levels vary seasonally and tend to be higher in the winter months. The best time to test for radon is between the months of November through March. Windows and outside doors should remain closed as much as possible during radon testing.

NDDH is unable to reserve kits or mail them. Test kits can also be purchased from a local hardware store or the American Lung Association by calling 1-800-LUNG-USA or by visiting www.lung.org.

The EPA recommends that homes with radon levels at or above 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) be fixed. Homeowners should consider reducing their potential lung cancer risk by fixing homes with radon levels between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L.

Radon levels can be reduced by hiring certified radon mitigation professionals who can install ventilation systems, soil depressurization systems, and seal entry routes for radon gas in existing homes. New homes are built with radon-resistant features. To learn more about radon and to obtain a list of radon mitigation contractors, visit the DPH Radon Program website at www.ct.gov/radon.

Additional resources: NDDH <https://www.nddh.org/services/community-health/radon/>
EPA <https://www.epa.gov/radon> and the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/radon/index.html>.

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