

RADON – Dangerous Gas Found in Some Homes

Radon is a radioactive gas that is found naturally in the environment, including in rocks, soil and groundwater. It can enter buildings, including homes, through their foundations and become trapped. Radon is colorless and odorless, so you can breathe it without knowing it is in your home. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has indicated that the average level of radon gas in homes in the U.S. is 1.3 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). Breathing in an unsafe level of radon (4 pCi/L or higher per EPA) over time can increase the risk of developing lung cancer. The EPA estimates that **1 of every 15 American homes has radon levels above the recommended safety level of 4 pCi/L.**

Radon Testing. Tests for Radon are available. The least expensive test method is to purchase a test kit which costs about \$20,00. Place the testing device in your basement for several days, then send it to a lab for analysis. The Lab will send you the result of the test. A Radon monitoring device for constant monitoring is also available for about \$60.00. A third way is to pay a contractor to do the testing.

Radon Mitigation. The EPA recommends that some type of mitigation (lowering the Radon gas level) be done if the gas level is at or over 4 pCi/L. One option, if the gas level is not high, is to install an exhaust vent and fan in the wall of the basement to the outside to lower the level down to or below 1 pCi/L. A second option is to have a Radon remediation contractor install a mitigation system in the basement. It consists of piping installed in the floor of the basement down into the soil and piped to the outside with an exhaust fan installed in the piping. The exhaust fan would run constantly or periodically depending on how long it takes to reduce the Radon gas level to 1 pCi/l.

Radon Mitigation System

