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The Home
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Radon Gas - Are You at Risk of the 2nd Leading Cause of Lung Cancer?

According to the EPA, radon gas is the 2nd leading cause for lung cancer, after smoking. Radon is a silent killer in that you cannot smell or see it. But in many parts of the U.S., there can be high levels of radon gas present in homes due materials in the subsoil. Radon gas comes from the radioactive decay of Uranium, which is commonly found in the granite in the ground. This gas then will migrate through the soil and into the home through cracks and separations in the basement flooring. The only way to find out if you have a high level of radon gas is to test for it. According to the EPA, you should consider mitigating your home of radon gas if the levels are above 4 pCi/L.

It is always recommended that potential home buyers have the house tested for radon prior to purchase. This will allow them to make a decision as to whether to buy the home or to have the seller mitigate the problem. But there are a number of reasons why they should consider having a second test done after they have been in their home for a while.

These include:

- Conditions change in the home from when you purchased it, like new cracks in the foundation or floor.
- They are using your basement more now that you have a small child in their home. As radon gas is heavier than air, it puts them closer to where the radon is coming through the basement floor.
- Radon counts in their home can vary from one day to the next, so when they had it measured, it could have been at a low point. To see a study on time variability of radon in homes, [click here](#).
- Some home sellers do things (inadvertently or deliberately) to cause the radon count to be lower (such as leaving windows open during a short term test, tampering with the reader, etc.).
- Even though home-owners probably had their home tested previously, our recommendation is to do another test where they can control the conditions. It is recommended doing a short term test of 48-96 hours in duration followed by a long term test of >90 days.

The short term test will give them a quick snapshot as to whether you need to do mitigation in their home now. But this test needs to be done with all of their windows closed and not allowing a whole house fan to operate, which sometimes is difficult in the summer months, especially if it is hot. The long term test does not require any closed conditions like the short term test and gives a better average radon condition in their home over time.

For homes that have well water, they should seriously consider having the water tested for radon. It is not typically a risk for ingestion, but it contributes to the radon in air as it is rapidly released from water when it is flowing out of a faucet, in a washing machine or in a shower.

It is recommended that if your use a nationally certified radon tester to ensure that the testing will be done properly, but there are many test kits available at home improvement or hardware stores. If it found that the home has elevated radon counts, the tester can recommend various alternatives for mitigating the gas before it has a chance to enter into the home, including suggesting various certified radon mitigators in our area.

The test for radon gas is relatively inexpensive. It is better to know if you have a high level of radon gas than to gamble with your family's well being.

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Louie Delaware, **The Home Safety Guru**[™], president and founder of US Safety Pros, LLC is a Certified Child & Home Safety Professional in all aspects of home safety, from childproofing to home safety, radon testing & mitigation along with fire, carbon monoxide and barrier free construction. US Safety Pros has helped safeguard over 700 homes. For more information about Louie Delaware, go to his web site, www.HomeSafetyGuru.com.



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