



# Radon

## What is radon?

- Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that results from the radioactive decay (breakdown) of uranium and radium.
- It naturally occurs in soil, rock and ground water.

## Why is radon a concern?

- Radon is a known human carcinogen. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer.
- In Indiana, almost one in four homes tested for radon indicate elevated levels.

## How can I be exposed to radon?

- Radon can seep into any building from the ground below, exposing occupants to its dangers.
- Radon typically enters a building's air supply through cracks, sump pumps, crawlspaces, construction joints, gaps around service pipes and other unsealed areas of entry.
- Radon can also dissolve into well water and contribute to airborne radon in homes when released through running water.

## How can I tell if radon is present in my home or building?

- A radon test in your home or building is the only way to know if radon is present and if it poses a threat.
- The type of test that should be used depends upon the type of building and why the test is being performed.
- During real estate transactions and for large commercial or apartment buildings, most people choose a certified tester.
- The Indiana State Department of Health maintains a list of Indiana Certified Radon Testers at [www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radoncertifapp.pdf](http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radoncertifapp.pdf).
- If you wish to personally test the radon levels in your own home, there are two options:
  - 1) Purchase a radon home test kit from a local hardware store and follow the directions or
  - 2) Call a certified lab to purchase a test kit and follow the directions.
- ISDH maintains a list of Indiana Certified Laboratories at [www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radon\\_lab\\_list.pdf](http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/pdfs/radon_lab_list.pdf).

## What can be done to reduce exposure to radon in my home or building?

- The most effective way to permanently reduce radon levels in a home or building is to install a radon mitigation system.
- All mitigation systems use the same basic technology, but vary slightly for each building or home. Mitigation systems vary because the system's design depends on the specific conditions in the structure, such as foundation type (slab, crawl space, basement), structural obstacles, building use, size and other factors.
- For best results, be sure to have an Indiana Certified Mitigator install the radon reduction system in your home or building.
- The Indiana State Department of Health maintains a database of licensed radon mitigation contractors at [www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/radon.htm](http://www.IN.gov/isdh/regsvcs/radhealth/radon.htm).
- Be sure to test your home after the installation of a radon reduction system and re-test every two years; environmental and building conditions can change. It is important to monitor the system to ensure it is operating properly.
- If you are building a new home, ask your contractor to use radon resistant construction techniques. Learn more about these techniques at [www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/construc.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/construc.html).

## Where can I get additional information?

Call the Indiana State Department of Health and Department of Environmental Management Radon Hotline at (800) 272-9723.