



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Board of Health Sidney-Shelby County

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Date: January 11, 2018
Contact: Kent L. Topp, RS, Director of Environmental Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keep Radon Out of Your Home

January is National Radon Action Month, when Ohio residents are urged to test their homes for radon.

Soil in central Ohio can have high levels of radon gas. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, and it can seep into homes. To help protect residents, the Sidney-Shelby County Health Department offers homeowners free test kits. These easy-to-use home test kits are available at www.uchd.net/radon.

Winter is the best time to test your home. During these colder months, our homes are closed up, trapping gases inside and providing more accurate radon readings.

Radon gas results from the decay of naturally occurring uranium found in nearly all soils. Radon cannot be seen, smelled or tasted, making testing the only way to determine if it is in your home. Radon can leak into homes through cracks in foundations, openings around sump pumps and drains, construction joints and cracks in walls.

It is estimated that nearly one home in every 15 in the U.S. has an elevated radon level. Elevated levels have been found in all areas of the country, including central Ohio. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter (pCi/L) and the EPA has identified 4 pCi/L as a recommended action level.

“Shelby County has been designated as a zone one area on the EPA’s radon map,” Topp said. “This means the EPA predicts that homes within our area could have high radon levels. Therefore, it is important all homeowners in our area test for radon gas.”

According to the University of Toledo’s Ohio Radon Information System, 1,103 Shelby County homes have been tested for radon. The maximum reading for Shelby County was 111.1 pCi/L, the minimum Shelby County reading was 0.1 pCi/L, with an average reading of 7.3 pCi/L. If your home registers high levels of radon, it can be removed from your home through a variety of mitigation systems. According to the EPA, mitigation systems can cost between \$600 and \$1,200. More information on radon mitigation can be found at www.epa.gov/radon by clicking on the “Publications and Resources link” and viewing the EPA publication *Consumer’s Guide to Radon*.

To get a free test kit, homeowners can log onto www.uchd.net/radon. After completing a short online form, a free test kit will be mailed within a few weeks.

Radon test kits are easy to use. Place the small, non-obtrusive test kit in the lowest living level of the home for three to seven days. Then, seal the kit and mail it to the certified laboratory for analysis. Confidential results are available online a few days later or can be mailed to the homeowner within approximately two weeks.

For more information, please visit www.shelbycountyhealthdept.org, www.uchd.net/radon, or www.epa.gov/radon.

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Ohio Health Departments Announce 2018 Radon Campaign

In January, more than 30 county health departments in Ohio will be launching a joint public health campaign for National Radon Action Month. The goal of the campaign is to urge Ohioans to test for radon in their homes with a free test kit.

“Radon is the number one cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers, and has been found in many Ohio homes,” said Kent L. Topp, RS, Director of Environmental Health for the Sidney-Shelby County Health Department. “The public health agencies of this state have come together to form a singular message informing all Ohioans of the threat of radon.”

The campaign will help citizens visualize radon, which is an invisible gas, as a burglar breaking into Ohio homes.

“The significance of the burglar is that he is there to steal something important from you and your loved ones—your health,” Topp said.

Topp said health departments will be placing ads on social media, audio and video streaming services, billboards and in newspapers. This broad approach helps reach as many Ohioans as possible during National Radon Action Month.

“According to the EPA [US Environmental Protection Agency], central Ohio is at risk for high levels of radon in the soil,” Topp said. “It makes it incredibly important to show people that their health could be at risk.”

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in nearly all soils. Radon cannot be seen, smelled or tasted. This makes testing the only way to determine if the deadly gas is in your home. Radon leaks into homes through cracks in the foundation, openings around sump pumps and **drains, construction joints, and cracks in walls.**

If a high level of radon is found in your home, the next step is to remove it by putting in a radon mitigation system. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, mitigation systems can cost between \$600 and \$1,200.

To order a free test kit, please visit www.uchd.net/radon. To learn more about radon, visit www.epa.gov/radon.

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