Nevada Radon Education Program

Protecting Your Home and Your Health

Nevada is known for its beautiful landscape, but did you know that it also has a significant radon problem? Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers. In this flyer, we will provide you with essential information on radon and how to protect yourself and your family from its harmful effects.

What is Radon?

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil, rocks and water. It can seep into buildings through cracks in the foundation, walls and floors. Radon can be found in all types of buildings, including homes, schools and workplaces. It can accumulate to high levels in enclosed spaces, especially in areas with poor ventilation.

How Does Radon Enter a Home?

Radon enters a home through cracks and openings in the foundation, walls and floors. It can also enter through well water. Once inside, radon can accumulate to high levels and pose a significant health risk.

Common Entry Points

Common entry points for radon in a home include:

- Cracks in the foundation
- Gaps around pipes and wires
- Sump pumps
- Floor drains
- Crawlspaces
- Wall joints

Does your Home Have a Radon Problem?

The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test for it. You cannot see, smell or taste radon. Testing is easy and inexpensive, and you can do it yourself or hire a professional. The recommended test period is a minimum of 48 hours.

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College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources

For more information visit
extension.unr.edu/radon

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Radon Education

Radon is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that can lead to lung cancer.

Ways to test your home

You can test your home for radon using a do-it-yourself test kit or by hiring a professional radon tester. Extension's Nevada Radon Education Program offers free test kits to Nevada residents during January and February. They are available year-round for $11 at your local Extension office.

"The U.S. Surgeon General recommends that all homes in the U.S. be tested for radon."

How to Fix a Radon Problem

If your home has high levels of radon, there are ways to reduce your exposure. The most effective method is to install a radon mitigation system, which uses a fan to draw radon out of the house and release it safely into the atmosphere. Other methods include sealing cracks in walls and floors and improving ventilation.

How Radon Causes Lung Cancer

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers and the second leading cause of lung cancer overall. When radon is inhaled, it can damage lung tissue and increase the risk of developing lung cancer. The risk of developing lung cancer increases with the level and duration of exposure to radon.

Radon Levels Pose Same Risk as Smoking

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), radon exposure is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States. The EPA estimates that the risk of lung cancer from radon exposure is about 10 times greater for smokers than for nonsmokers. However, even nonsmokers can develop lung cancer from radon exposure.

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