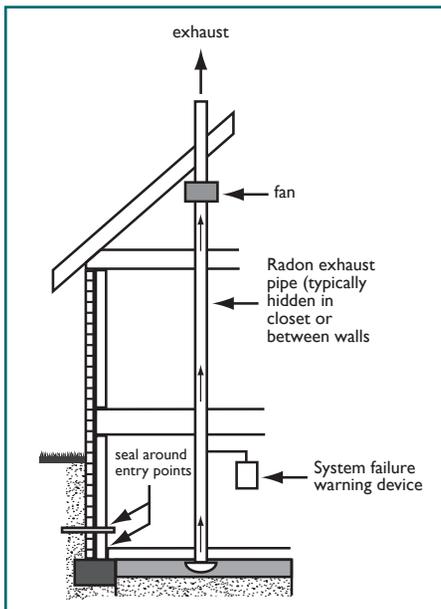


How do I lower radon levels in my home?

Reducing radon levels in your home requires technical knowledge and skill, and typically involves hiring a radon mitigation contractor.

The most common approach to mitigating a radon problem is referred to as sub-slab depressurization or sub-slab suction. This technique draws radon-filled air from beneath the foundation through a pipe using a fan, and vents the radon outside. Sealing cracks and holes in the foundation makes this technique more effective.

Typical Radon mitigation system



There are other mitigation techniques available that have proven effective in reducing indoor radon levels. Contact us for additional information or to obtain a list of mitigation companies in Oregon.

Did you know?

- ▶ **RADON** is the second-leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.
- ▶ **RADON** levels in your home can vary significantly from your neighbor's.
- ▶ **RADON** can be found in homes with all types of construction, including slab-on-grade foundations, crawlspaces and basements.



Radon



Have you tested your home for radon?

DHS
Oregon Department of Human Services
Public Health Division
Radiation Protection Services
800 N.E. Oregon Street, Suite 640
Portland, OR 97232
www.healthoregon.org/rps/radon
971-673-0490

Protecting Oregonians from unnecessary radiation exposure.

DHS | Independent. Healthy. Safe.

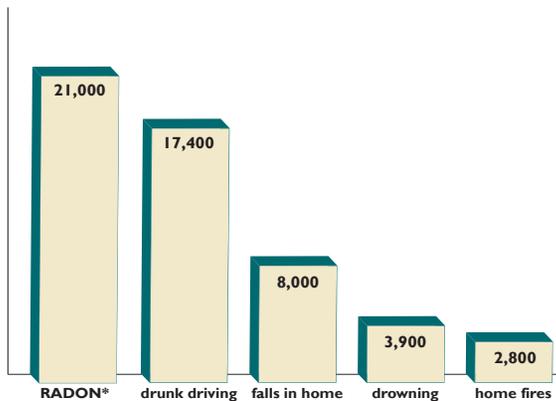
What is radon?

- Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that you can't see, smell or taste.
- It is produced by the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. Uranium is found in soils worldwide, with some areas having higher concentrations than others.

Why is radon harmful?

- Radon breaks down into solid particles known as radon decay products. These decay products can become trapped in the lungs when inhaled and damage lung tissue by emitting radiation.
- Over time, exposure to elevated levels of radon increases a person's risk of developing lung cancer. This risk is greatly increased for smokers.

Estimates of lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. caused by exposure to radon.



U.S. EPA: *A Citizen's Guide to Radon*, 2005

How does radon enter a home?

- The major source of radon in a home comes from the ground beneath it. Radon moves up through soil and enters through cracks and holes in the foundation.
- Radon gas can become trapped inside a home and build to unhealthy levels. Any home can have a radon problem: new or old, well-insulated or drafty, with or without a basement.

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

- Radon also can enter through a home's water supply. Some wells have elevated levels of radon in the water. Radon can be released into the air during showers and other household uses. Radon from the water supply is typically minimal compared to ground sources.
- The only way to know if you have high levels of radon in your home is to test for it. Radon levels are most commonly measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L). The EPA recommends taking corrective action if the radon levels in your home are 4 pCi/L or higher.

How can I get my home tested?

- You can hire a radon measurement company to test your home or perform the test yourself.
- Visit our Web site at www.healthoregon.org/rps/radon for contact information and a list of measurement companies that provide services in Oregon, or for a coupon to order a radon test kit.

Which test should I use?

- The EPA recommends taking a short-term test first. Short-term tests take from two to 90 days and allow for quick results that offer a "snapshot" of radon concentrations.
- If your short-term test results come back between 4 and 8 pCi/L, follow up with a long-term test to confirm your results. Long-term tests run from 91 days to a year and offer a more accurate measure of the yearly average concentration of radon.
- If the results from your initial short-term test come back over 8 pCi/L, perform another short-term test to confirm the results and average the short-term test results together.
- You should fix your home if the average of your short-term tests or result of your long-term test are 4 pCi/L or higher.