

RADON INFORMATION FOR THE HOME SELLER

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water. Breathing air containing radon increases the risk of lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

Radon enters buildings through cracks and other openings in the foundation. Nearly one out of every 15 homes in the United States is estimated to have an elevated radon level. Testing is the only way to know the radon level in a home.

EPA recommends that you test your home before putting it on the market, when there is more time to address a radon issue if one is found. Save the test results and all information you have about steps that were taken to fix any problems. If you do the test yourself, test in the lowest level of the home that could be used regularly and be sure to follow the test instructions. If you hire a contractor to test your home, protect yourself by using a qualified individual or company. Nationally-certified radon professionals can be found through the National Radon Proficiency Program (www.nrpp.info) or the National Radon Safety Board (www.nrsb.org). In South Carolina, sellers are required to disclose known problems with radon gas.

If your home has already been tested for radon and you are sure that your test was done correctly, provide your test results to the buyer. A buyer may ask for another test, especially if more than two years have passed, the home has been renovated since the test, or a lower level of the house than was tested will be used regularly.

Radon problems can be fixed. EPA recommends that your home be mitigated for radon if the radon level is 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) or higher. Even very high levels can be reduced to acceptable levels.

Most homes can be mitigated for about the same cost as other common home repairs. Be aware that a potential conflict of interest exists if the same person or firm performs the testing and installs the mitigation system. Test the home again after mitigation to be sure that radon levels have been reduced. EPA recommends that post-mitigation testing be conducted by an independent, qualified radon tester.

More information on radon and real estate can be found on the SC Radon Program webpage, des.sc.gov/radon. The radon program can be reached at radon@des.sc.gov or 1-800-768-0362.