

# RADON GAS

High levels of radon have been detected in the District of Thunder Bay and surrounding areas.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless radioactive gas that's formed during the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water. Radon exits the ground and can seep into your home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Radon gas can also contaminate well water.

Health officials have determined that radon gas is a carcinogen that can cause lung cancer. Studies show that radon is more of a risk to smokers, but non smokers have a slightly elevated chance of developing lung cancer when radon levels in the home are high.

The only way to find out if your house contains radon gas is to perform radon tests.

## How to Test for Radon

Radon tests should be performed on the lowest level of the home that could be used for living space without doing renovations.

- Choose a room that is used regularly, but do not use the kitchen, bathroom, laundry room or a hallway.
- Sometimes two devices are used simultaneously or two 48-hour tests are done back-to-back to help establish average radon levels and to verify that devices are working properly.
- Keep windows and doors in the tested room shut except for normal entry and exit. For tests lasting less than four days, make sure windows and outside doors are closed for at least 12 hours before beginning.
- Do not do short term radon tests during times of high humidity, severe storms, or when winds are high.
- Place the testing device at least 20 inches above the floor so that it is out of drafts and high humidity and will not be disturbed.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions to record starting and ending times. Reseal the tester package and return it to the lab for analysis.

Health Canada's recommended guideline is 200 bcq/m3. If your home tests higher than the guidelines some form of remediation is required to bring the levels within the guidelines.

This may involve sealing all holes in the basement floor such as sump pits , cracks etc drilling a hole in the basement floor and installing piping and a fan unit to vent the gas outside the home.

A re-test should then be performed.