



RADON AWARENESS

Toolbox Talks for the members of Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities

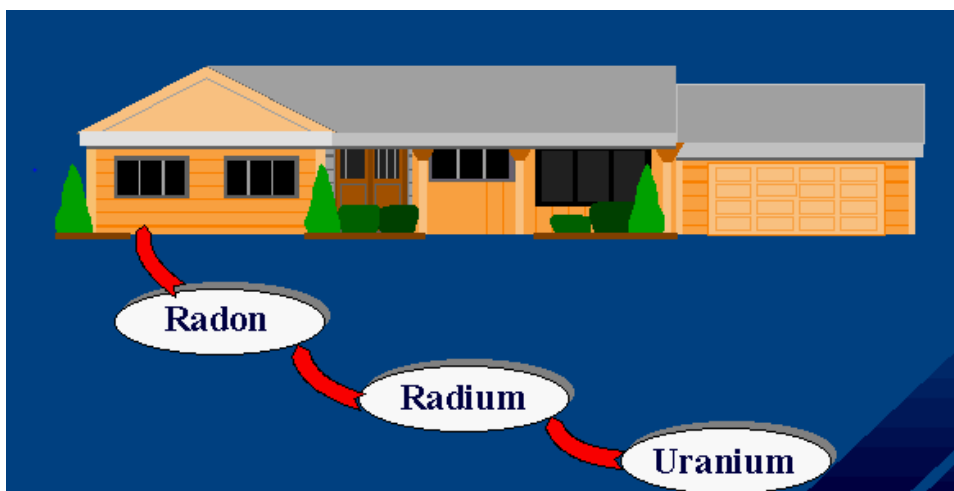
January 2015

Each year about 21,000 Americans die from lung cancer caused by exposure to radon. “Many people don’t realize that radon is the second cause of lung cancer after smoking,” said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. “The good news is radon exposure is preventable.”

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally from the breakdown of uranium. The air pressure in your home is usually lower than pressure in the soil around your home’s foundation. This difference in air pressure allows your home to act as a vacuum, drawing radon in through foundation cracks and other openings.

Testing is the only way to know your home’s radon levels. Call the Radon Hotline at the Iowa Department of Public Health for inexpensive do-it-yourself radon test kits and for answers to radon questions by dialing: 1-800-383-5992. Radon test kits are also available at most hardware stores (like Lowe’s or Home Depot) or home stores (like Target or Walmart) and can cost as little as \$20.

The Iowa Department of Public Health and the EPA recommends that you have a licensed or certified radon mitigation contractor install your radon removal system because lowering high radon levels requires specific technical knowledge and special skills.



pCi/L means picocuries per liter of air, a standard measurement for radioactive gas.

- According to the Iowa Department of Public Health, The Iowa Radon Survey has indicated that Iowa has the largest percentage (or 71.6%) of homes above the US Environmental Protection Agency action level of 4pCi/L. Iowa is also designated by the US EPA as an entirely zone 1 state.