



Radon Bulletin



Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Inc.

March 2009

Mike Pyles Recognized as 2009 CRCPD Radon Hero

By John P. Winston, CRCPD Chairperson

EPA National Radon Award Ceremony ⇒ I had the distinct privilege of recognizing Mike Pyles, Pennsylvania, as CRCPD’s 2009 Radon Hero at EPA’s National Radon Awards Ceremony. Mike received a certificate that said:

Developed standards for testing and mitigation ⇒ “As Chief of the Pennsylvania Radon Division, Mike fully embraced the need to develop standards to test and mitigate homes from the beginning. He has worked to develop some of the first state laws and regulations to ensure that radon testing and mitigations were performed to acceptable standards.



EPA recognizes Pennsylvania’s outstanding work ⇒ “Through Mike’s leadership, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is recognized as a leader in the radon area. This is illustrated by the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) recognition of Pennsylvania’s Radon Division’s outstanding work in 2007.

Radon efforts involved many organizations ⇒ “Mike’s radon efforts over the years have involved routine annual EPA grants for outreach and program support; facilitating ads, TV and radio PSAs involving millions of dollars; free testing for new parents via the New Born Program; huge involvement with the Pennsylvania’s Broadcaster’s Association, Pennsylvania Board of Realtors, and the American Lung Association; direct involvement with major research studies (e.g., geology, drinking water, soil moisture); and years of dedicated service on the CRCPD’s E-25 Committee on Radon.

Developed some of the first radon state laws ⇒ “He has worked to develop some of the first state laws and regulations to ensure that radon testing and mitigations were performed to acceptable standards.”

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CRCPD's Radon Hero

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The actual award will be given to Mike at the 19th National Radon Training Conference, which will be held September 21-23, 2009 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Other individuals and organizations recognized ⇒ The National Safety Council and EPA organized the National Radon Awards Ceremony at the National Press Club to recognize our national radon leaders. Along with Mike, individuals were acknowledged for their achievements in the National Radon Poster Contest, the Radon YouTube Video Contest, as well as the National Conference of State Legislatures Award, American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists Award and CanSAR. The stories and work of these individuals are remarkable and there is no doubt they will succeed in improving radon awareness. The winning posters can be viewed at <http://www.nsc.org/resources/issues/radon/poster_winners.aspx> and the winning video can be viewed at <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WcvoZ1pP3ak>>.



National Radon Action Month Activities

These state activities are shared so that any other state may use them in their program.

Kansas's Radon Action Month Activities

By Kim Steves (KS)

- 53,399 hits to web site in January ⇒ During January, the main home page of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment web site, www.kdheks.gov, included information about radon, including a warning and recommendation to test, and a link to the Kansas Radon Program web site. The KDHE web site home page documented 53,399 hits during the month of January.
- Newsletter reaches 1,000 employees and information is on the web site ⇒ Articles about Radon in Kansas and Kansas Radon Action Month were published in the January and February editions of the KDHE Newsletter. The monthly KDHE newsletter is distributed electronically to the approximately 1,000 agency employees. It is also published on the KDHE web site, with an announcement of its availability sent out to a very large mailing list of interested citizens and organizations.
- Test kits given to employees ⇒ Ten free radon test kits were given away to employees of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment through a drawing in January. Over 100 KDHE employees entered the drawing. Information on radon and how to test was also provided to the non-winning entries.
- Full page ad purchased ⇒ EPA Region 7 Office of Public Affairs submitted a Press Advisory about National Radon Action Month to all media outlets in Kansas at the beginning of January. EPA Region 7, which is located in Kansas City,

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Radon Action Month Activities

[Continued]

Kansas [Continued]

Kansas, purchased a full page radon PSA advertisement in the January publications of the “Kansas City New Home Guide” and the “Kansas City Homes and Gardens” magazines.

Students awarded certificates and top three also received prizes and recognition

The Kansas students who entered the National Radon Poster Contest were recognized with certificates of participation and radon rulers. The Kansas students who were the top three finishers for the state in the National Radon Poster Contest were awarded framed certificates, prizes and recognition.



1st Place, Kansas – National Radon Poster Contest, by Genesis Garcia, 5th grader

Kansas Governor ➡
Sebelius signed a proclamation declaring January to be Kansas Radon Action Month



Kansas Governor Sebelius signed a proclamation declaring January Radon Action Month in Kansas. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment issued a press release in conjunction with the Governor’s Proclamation of Kansas Radon Action Month.



Nebraska’s Radon Action Month Activities

By Sarah Morgan (NE)

National Radon Action Month (NRAM) activities in Nebraska included:

- PSAs ➡
 - A contract with the Nebraska Broadcasters Association to run radio PSAs from December 2008 – February 2009. These are radon PSAs created by EPA and “tagged” with our department name and radon hotline number.
- Governor’s ➡
Proclamation
 - A Governor’s Proclamation declaring January 2009 as National Radon Action Month in Nebraska. Nebraska Radon Program staff attended a signing ceremony January 21, 2009 and received a photo of staff with the Lt. Governor.
- Sell test kits ➡
 - The Nebraska Radon Program sells short-term radon test kits for \$5, and long-term test kits for \$15 through the mail.
- Press release ➡
 - A press release was issued and so far has been picked up by 5-10 major news outlets across the state. The release mentions the Governor’s Proclamation, discusses some basic facts about radon, includes quotes from our Director and Chief Medical Officer, and informs people about the opportunity to purchase low-cost test kits.

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Radon Action Month Activities

[Continued]

Presentation to Realtors

Regular activities continue

Nebraska [Continued]

- Seven schools were tested for radon by Program Staff during the month of January and four more will be tested in February.
- A radon presentation was given to Realtors the second week of January. Thirty-one realtors attended and at least four future presentations were committed to as a result of this initial talk.
- In addition to these events, the Program continues regular activities such as business audits and mitigation system inspections for the licensed industry; assisting individuals and companies looking to obtain licensure; operating the Radon Hotline; providing assistance to mini-grant recipients; preparing reports; working on activities related to the Region 7 Radon Stakeholders meeting; and handling any enforcement issues that arise.

More activities listed on web site

These activities are only those arranged and conducted by the State staff, and does not count activities conducted around Nebraska that are arranged by local program partners and EPA Region 7 staff. For a more complete listing, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/radon/nram/events/nebraska.html>. For more information, contact Sara Morgan, Program Manager, at 402-471-8320 or sara.morgan@nebraska.gov.



The Garden State Goes Greener

Linda Z. Jordan, NJ Outreach Coordinator

The “Green Sox Campaign” is running!

New Jersey literally hit the ground running after the unveiling of “Living Healthy and Green,” the Green Sox Campaign, at the 18th National Radon Conference. Of course it didn’t hurt that Pat Gardner, Manager of the Bureau of Environmental Radiation, caught a pair of green socks during the kick-off! Ideas were brewing before we had a chance to pack



Fuad Reveiz and Linda Jordan (NJ)

our bags and head home on how we could use this tool for National Radon Action Month (NRAM), and for our outreach efforts.

As a result, the “Living Healthy & Green” media campaign, along with the link to the EPA NRAM web site, were included in our web site as well as in our letters announcing NRAM. This letter is an important partnering tool that was sent to all 266 New Jersey mayors, local and county health departments, radon professionals, and county cancer coalitions. A Radon Action Packet was attached to the letter that offered suggestions for outreach activities, a sample press release, and an

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Radon Action Month

Activities

[Continued]

New Jersey *[Continued]*

order form for outreach materials. The order form included space where planned activities could be listed, information on how to nationally share activities, and our intention to formally recognize those municipalities with outstanding radon outreach programs. Upon receipt of all order forms, a Radon Partner thank you letter was sent out, which reinforced sharing activities nationally and future selection for recognition awards.

- A media campaign ⇒ Last year, Radon Action Partnership Awards were presented to four reached potential partners throughout the state recipients that included three health departments and one municipality. The awards presentation was conducted at the Health Officers Association annual meeting, which was held during the League of Municipalities Convention. This event was very successful, and was a great way to honor the winners for all their innovative ideas and hard work, and we plan to do it again this year.
- Postmaster email ⇒ A Postmaster email entitled “Go Green From the Ground Up” was sent to 3100 NJDEP employees, and a paycheck message was inserted with all state-issued paychecks to 82,921 state employees through a partnership with the Department of Treasury. In addition, Green Sox campaign items were localized and PowerPoint slides were developed that were used for the lobby monitor at the main NJDEP building located in Trenton during NRAM.
- Special thanks were ⇒ As part of our NRAM celebration, a letter was sent to Senator Frank sent to Senator Lautenberg Lautenberg thanking him for his contribution in reducing the risk of lung cancer from radon for thousands of New Jerseyans due to his leadership 20 years ago in enacting the Indoor Radon Abatement Act of 1988. This letter further served to document the progress that has been made over the last 20 years in New Jersey’s radon program as we move closer to reaching our long-term goal of having indoor air be as free from radon as the ambient air outside. Hopefully, this may also spark an interest in other proposed bills for additional radon legislation.
- Up to \$1000 ⇒ This year we made a new partnership with the County Cancer Coalitions, reimbursement for the purchase of radon test kits is provided and an invite to a quarterly meeting resulted in several requests to participate in our Radon Awareness Program (RAP) and Newborn Pilot Program. This program provides participants up to \$1000 reimbursement for the purchase of radon test kits that can be distributed free of charge to homeowners and new parents, respectively. Several of the coalitions also requested radon information and partnered with us for NRAM.
- Hundreds of ⇒ An article was also written that emphasized NRAM and was published businesses and professional offices reached in “Camden County Woman.” This free publication was available in hundreds of businesses and professional offices throughout Camden County. In addition, several presentations were conducted, including the Jersey Shore Chapter of the Sierra Club.

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[Continued]

Partnered with the
Department of
Education

New Jersey [Continued]

We also participated in the National Radon Poster Contest. Through a partnership with the Department of Education, contest information was also sent out electronically to all New Jersey schools. This year, information was also sent out electronically via e-mail to various associations and clubs for possible inclusion on their web sites and newsletters, which included the New Jersey Science Teachers Association, Art Educators of New Jersey, New Jersey Homeschool Association, and the various chapters and councils of the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

154 entries received
for Poster Contest

We received 154 entries from six schools and one Girl Scout. In addition to first, second, and third place winners, we also selected six honorable mention winners, and the school with the most entries (57). All participants received a certificate of participation, as well as a backpack highlighter, and radon informational brochures. To date, presentations for second, third place and associated honorable mention winners were presented during a school assembly, and school board meeting, respectively. First place winners opted for an end of the school year presentation in June.

Laraine Koehler
was a hit in her
green socks

EPA-Region 2 representative Laraine Koehler, Radon & Indoor Air Coordinator, was gracious enough to present at the school assembly decked out in her green socks, which were a hit with the students. The school assembly was conducted during Catholic School Week, which promoted community service, and Laraine cleverly tied this into radon and the poster contest.

It definitely was a busy NRAM, and as I sit across from my fellow Radon Program employees to take a breather, I can't help but notice that they're wearing their Green Sox pins—made by Pat Gardner, of course!



New Mexico's Radon Action Month Activities

By Michael Taylor (NM)

New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Secretary Ron Curry issued a press release designating January as “Radon Action Month,” encouraging all residents of New Mexico to test their homes.

Free test kits for
New Mexico
residents

NMED is also offering on a first come, first served basis free radon test kits for New Mexico residents. Information on the free test kits has been included in several local and regional newspapers, TV and radio broadcasts across the state.

NMED staff will be manning information booths and giving out free radon test kits at a construction industries trade fair and a separate health fair sponsored by a local television station (KOB, a local NBC affiliate) in Albuquerque the third and fourth weeks in January, respectively.

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Radon Action Month Activities

[Continued]

New Mexico *[Continued]*

NMED Director Carlos Romero addressed the health concerns of indoor radon on radio station KRQE news, a local CBS affiliate. Link: January 12, 2009, http://www.krqe.com/dpp/news/krqe_mornings/mornings_krqe_radon_200901120545

Michael Taylor did a radio interview that was used several days ⇒ Michael A. Taylor, NMED Indoor Radon Outreach Program manager, was interviewed by KKOB radio, a local news and talk station that carried the press release information in their daily broadcasts for several days.



Oregon's National Radon Action Month Activities

By Brett Sherry (OR)

- Press release results in three interviews ⇒ • Press release informing media that January is Radon Action Month. As a result of the press release, I've had three radio interviews and one live TV news interview.
- Contacted radio and TV news stations ⇒ • Mass mail to Oregon radio stations and TV News asking that they play the EPA "Green Sox" Public Service Announcements.
- Fix-it Fair on 1/10/09, at which there were over 700 attendees.
- Test kits to Hood River County schools ⇒ • Personally provided radon testing at all schools in Hood River County. It was an excellent opportunity to educate teachers and students on hazards of radon.
- Newsletter article ⇒ • Produced an article for a community newsletter that happens to be in an area with high radon potential. The article was customized to their specific location.

That is about it so far. School testing has taken up the majority of my time.



Wisconsin's Radon Action Month Activities

By Conrad Weiffenbach (WI)

- Media blitz ⇒ For radon action month 2009, Wisconsin again had a blitz of news releases to media by cooperating local public health agencies and our Wisconsin Department of Health Services to coincide with EPA's releases.
- The structure of our program ⇒ To understand this approach, consider the structure of our program in this non-regulating state: 16 Wisconsin Regional Radon Information Centers (RICs) in local public health agencies, each with staff certified for measurement and mitigation and experience of many years serving the public in the counties of their region. In addition this year, 27 other local public health agencies are funded with \$2,500 or \$3,500 for outreach,

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Radon Action Month Activities

[Continued]

Advantage of local agencies doing news releases →

Wisconsin [Continued]

and they work with us and the RICs. The RICs arranged meetings in December with cooperating agencies in their regions to review methods of outreach and set up the radon action month media blitz. The advantage of having local agencies do releases is that the media can connect with personal radon stories in their coverage areas: people who measured radon and mitigated, local public health personnel, commercial mitigators and measurers.

As of January 16th, we know of these media results for 2009:

Results of the media blitz →

- LaCross County's RIC Jim Steinhoff sent me an article from the January 14th *LaCrosse Tribune's* Health section, five columns wide, headlined "invisible threat," with a smaller headline above, "Lung-cancer patient Sue Eber and health department official Jim Steinhoff want you to take action. Test your home, they say,"
- There was an article of similar size and scope in the Appleton *Post-Crescent* January 8th, 1,200 words, including a box with four bullets about the action level, six web links, and a photo of a local mitigator.
- There was a 602-word article in the Rice Lake *Chronotype* on January 8th, "County health authorities urge radon testing."
- A 670-word article in the Green Bay Press *Gazette* of January 11th included interviews of a certified mitigator and a certified measurer.
- There were shorter articles in the Pierce County *Herald* on January 8th and in the Milwaukee *Journal-Sentinel* January 13th.
- Broadcasts we know about so far: WSAW CH 7 TV, Wausau, January 6th - CBS (a 42 second story); WKBT TV, LaCrosse, January 7th - CBS (54 seconds); WJFW TV12, CBS, Eagle River January 13th.

From our Radon Action Month blitz in 2007, I documented 30 newspaper articles on radon, 13 TV broadcasts, and 13 radio interviews, many of them big, long ones. Local media love to tell localized stories. The Radon Action Month media blitz gives us and our partners a big head start on our objectives for the year.



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Press Release: NCRP Report No. 160

Medical Radiation Exposure of the U.S. Population Greatly Increased Since the Early 1980s

In 2006, Americans were exposed to more than seven times as much ionizing radiation from medical procedures as was the case in the early 1980s, according to a new report on population exposure released March 3rd by the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP) at its annual meeting in Bethesda, Maryland. In 2006, medical exposure constituted nearly half of the total radiation exposure of the U.S. population from all sources.

The increase was primarily a result of the growth in the use of medical imaging procedures, explained Dr. Kenneth R. Kase, senior vice president of NCRP and chairman of the scientific committee that produced the report. "The increase was due mostly to the higher utilization of computed tomography (CT) and nuclear medicine. These two imaging modalities alone contributed 36 percent of the total radiation exposure and 75 percent of the medical radiation exposure of the U.S. population." The number of CT scans and nuclear medicine procedures performed in the United States during 2006 was estimated to be 67 million and 18 million, respectively.

The NCRP Report No. 160, Ionizing Radiation Exposure of the Population of the United States, provides a complete review of all radiation exposures for 2006.

Background radiation, which in 2006 contributed fully half of the total exposure, comes from natural radiation in soil and rocks, radon gas which seeps into homes and other buildings, plus radiation from space and radiation sources that are found naturally within the human body.

Other small contributors of exposure to the U.S. population included consumer products and activities, industrial and research uses and occupational tasks.

NCRP is working with some of its partners like the American College of Radiology (ACR), World Health Organization and others to address radiation exposure resulting from the significant growth in medical imaging and to ensure that referrals for procedures like CT and nuclear medicine are based on objective, medically relevant criteria (e.g., ACR appropriateness criteria).

This year marks the 80th anniversary of NCRP's founding and the 45th anniversary of its charter from the U.S. Congress under Public Law 88-376.

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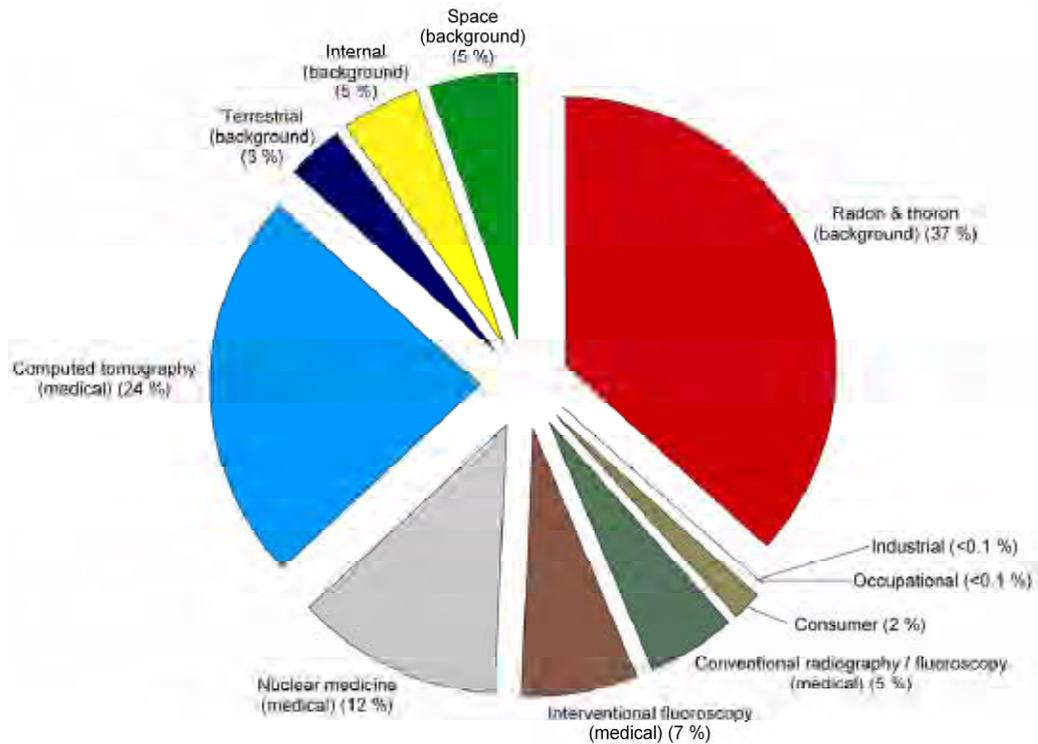
NCRP Press Release

[Continued]

A limited number of prepublication copies of Report No. 160 will be available during the NCRP annual meeting on March 2-3, 2009. The final Report will be available from the NCRP website, <http://NCRPpublications.org>, in both soft-and hardcopy formats. For additional information contact David A. Schauer, ScD, CHP at schauer@NCRPonline.org, 301.657.2652 (x20) or 301.907.8768 (fax).

The report is available from the NCRP web site

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