RADON: THE HAZARD WITH A SIMPLE SOLUTION

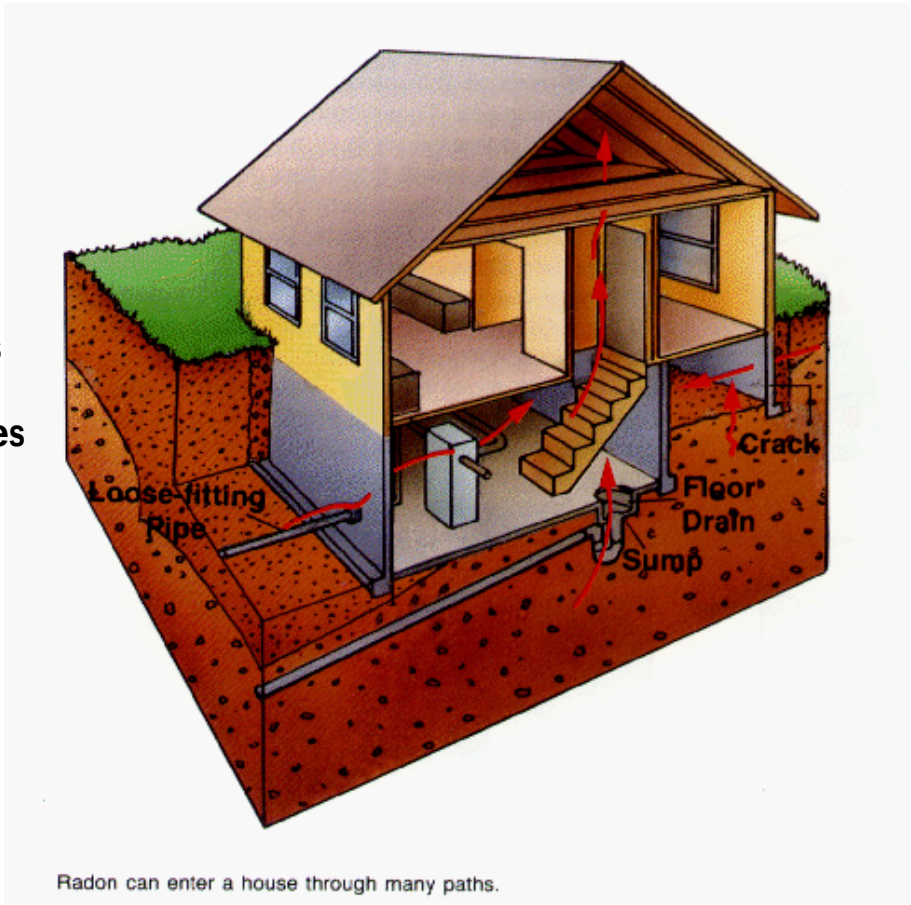
EPA estimates that about 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. are radon related. Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.

WHAT IS RADON & WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, and chemically inert radioactive gas. It is formed by the natural radioactive decay of uranium in rock, soil, and water. Naturally existing, low levels of uranium occur widely in Earth's crust. It can be found in all 50 states. Unless you test for it, there is no way of telling how much is present.

RADON GETS IN THROUGH:

- ☆ **Cracks in solid floors**
- ☆ **Construction joints**
- ☆ **Cracks in walls**
- ☆ **Gaps in suspended floors**
- ☆ **Gaps around service pipes**
- ☆ **Cavities inside walls**
- ☆ **The water supply**
- ☆ **Granite Countertops**
- ☆ **Masonry materials**
- ☆ **Sump Pumps**



Radon can enter a house through many paths.

TESTING FOR RADON

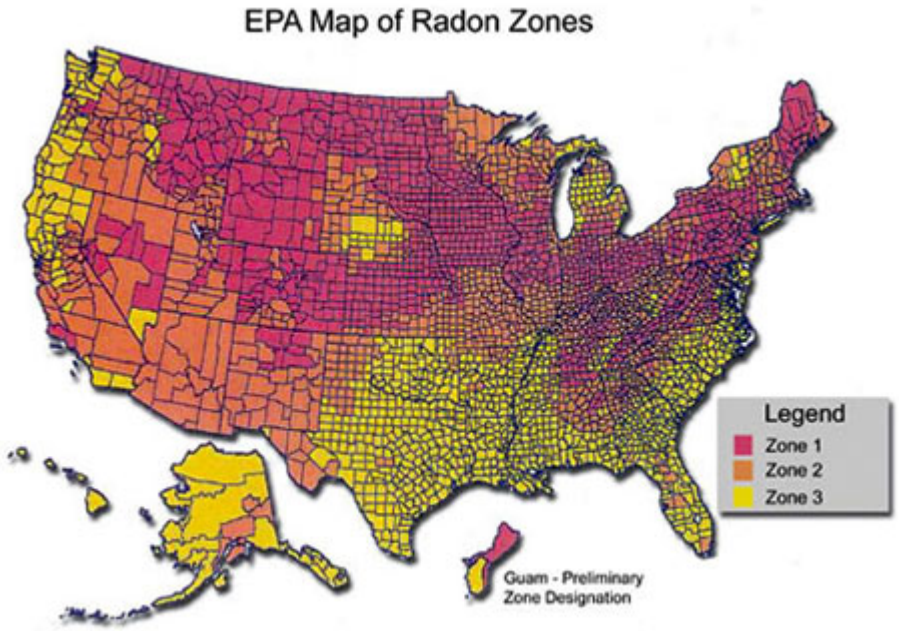
Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits can be purchased at local hardware and home improvement stores or directly from radon testing companies. Many are priced under $25.00. If your results come back at a high rate, you may want to consider hiring a NEHA Certified Radon Measurement Specialists (radon inspector) to confirm your test results. A list of radon inspectors for the S.W. region of Minnesota is listed below.

NEHA CERTIFIED RADON MEASUREMENT SPECIALISTS

Company	Inspector	Phone	City	County
Thor Wiebe Home Inspections	Thor Wiebe	(507) 537-1956	Marshall, MN	Lyon
RJ Larsen Systems & Service	Robert John Larsen	(605) 275-2221	Sioux Falls, SD	Minnehaha

INTERPRETING YOUR RESULTS

The US EPA has established the "action level" for deciding when you need to "do something" about the radon in your home, school, or work place is 4 pCi/l. pCi/l= picocuries per liter, the most popular method of reporting radon levels. For those interested in the numbers, a picoCurie is 0.000,000,000,001 (one-trillionth) of a Curie, an international measurement unit of radioactivity. 1 pCi/l means that in one liter of air there will be 2.2 radioactive disintegrations each minute. For example, at 4 pCi/l there will be approximately 12,672 radioactive disintegrations in one liter of air, during a 24-hour period. 4 pCi/l is the level accepted by most states and US territories.

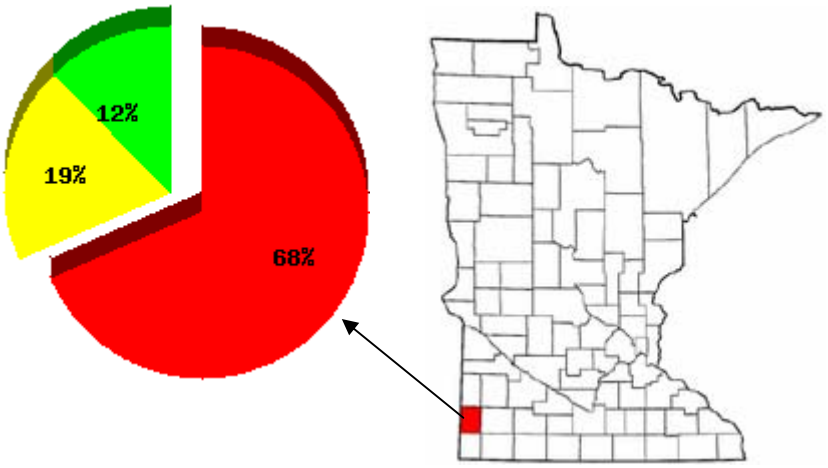


	Zone 1 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level greater than 4 pCi/L (pico curies per liter) **(red zones)**	**Highest Potential**
	Zone 2 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level between 2 and 4 pCi/L **(orange zones)**	**Moderate Potential**
	Zone 3 counties have a predicted average indoor radon screening level less than 2 pCi/L **(yellow zones)**	**Low Potential**

RADON LEVELS
IN PIPESTONE COUNTY

The average national indoor radon level is 1.3 pCi/L.

The average indoor radon levels of Pipestone County, as determined by radon test results from Air Chek, Inc, is 8.5 pCi/L



Pipestone County Results Chart

- Results under 2 pCi/L
- Results between 2 and 3.9 pCi/L
- Results 4 pCi/L and above

YOU'VE FOUND RADON IN YOUR HOME – WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

First, don't panic! Radon is everywhere and fixing a radon problem is very straight-forward.

Second, if you have performed only a single test, the US EPA recommends a follow-up test before fixing your home. Radon levels fluctuate naturally and it is important to know if the initial test was an accurate assessment of your home's average radon level or whether the high levels could have been caused by unusual weather.

How to Follow Up Your First Test

If your first test has a result between 4 and 10 pCi/L, you have the choice of testing again. If results are needed quickly, you can re-test with a short-term (2-7 days) device. For a better understanding of your home's year-round average, you can test with a long-term (3-12 months) device.

OPTIONS FOR HIGH RESULTS

Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to that of many common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed (anywhere from $800.00 to about $2500.00). If you have a high level of radon in your home, hiring a certified radon mitigation contractor is your best option.

However; if you choose, you can do a lot of the work yourself to save some money. Many homeowners will start by sealing up the cracks in their walls, floors, and around service pipes. Another step would be putting a cover over your sump pump and sealing around it. These do it yourself options are inexpensive and should decrease your level of radon. Listed below is a list of qualified contractors that are located in the S.W. region of Minnesota.

RESIDENTIAL MITIGATION PROVIDERS

Company Name	Location	Phone Number
Mark A. Janni Ahrens Heating Inc.	New Ulm,MN	(507) 354-2217
Michelle Knutson K-Builders	Dawson,MN	(320) 769-4415
Andrew Kelley Radon Solutions	Mankato,MN	(507) 351-2413
Jeff Baron Schwickert Company	Mankato,MN	(507) 387-3101
Thomas J. Tacheny Radon Arrest	Mankato,MN	(507) 345-8378
Thor Wiebe Thor Wiebe Home Inspections	Marshall,MN	(507) 537-1956

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT RADON AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR HEATH VISIT:

http://www.radon.com/
http://www.epa.gov/radon/
http://www.radongas.org/

January is National Radon Month! For anyone interested in testing their home, please stop by the Pipestone County Conservation & Zoning office during the month of January for a complimentary Radon Test Kit.
(Kits available while supply lasts)

Pipestone Conservation & Zoning
119 2nd Ave. SW, Suite 13
Pipestone, MN 56164
Hours: 8am - 4:30pm
Website: www.pipestoneswcd.org