

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 10/04/2019

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FREE RADON TEST KITS AVAILABLE DURING MONTH OF OCTOBER

Chris Klawuhn, Saginaw County Environmental Health Director, announced today that the Saginaw County Health Department is distributing free radon test kits during the month of October. He encourages area residents to get a kit and test their home during the coming heating season and, if necessary, to take action to reduce their exposure to this tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas.

Radon is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, according to EPA estimates. Overall, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year. About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. When elevated radon levels are found, residents should confirm measurements with additional testing, and then take action to reduce the levels in their homes.

Radon occurs naturally in soil and rock, but being a gas, it can move upward through the soil and it enters buildings through cracks and openings in the foundation floor or walls. Typical entry points include floor/wall joints, sump openings, crawlspaces, cracks in the floor, and other penetrations caused by plumbing, wiring, or ductwork. Outdoors, it is diluted by the atmosphere, but indoors it tends to be more concentrated and can accumulate to unhealthy levels. Klawuhn noted that “the only way to know if your home has an elevated radon level is to test your home.”

“Because radon is invisible and can’t be smelled, it’s easy to ignore,” Klawuhn said. “It doesn’t cause headaches, nausea, fatigue, skin rashes, or other warning symptoms that might be experienced as a result of exposure to many other environmental toxins, yet extended exposure to elevated levels may increase one’s risk of lung cancer, a generally fatal disease.”

Testing is easy and inexpensive, Klawuhn says. The do-it-yourself test kits distributed by the health department are normally available for \$10.00, and that includes postage back to an out-of-state

lab, as well as the fees for having the device analyzed and a report sent back to the consumer. Free kits are available through October 31st in Room 101 at the Saginaw County Health Department, 1600 N. Michigan Avenue in Saginaw. Kits are also available at the Rehmann Health Center, 147 S. Saginaw Street in Chesaning.

For more information, call Environmental Health Services at (989) 758-3686 or visit www.saginawcounty.org. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy also has a toll-free number at 1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642). For information on your risk of developing lung cancer due to radon exposure, whether you are a smoker or non-smoker, visit the EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/radon/health-risk-radon>.

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