

# What is Radon and what are the potential health risks

Radon gas is odorless, tasteless, and colorless.

It enters the home through cracks in the basement foundation and crawlspaces .

It can accumulate in the lungs over a period of years.

Harmful effects of high levels of indoor Radon gas are a problem.

The solution is to reduce the number of homes with high levels of Radon.

***The goal of the Pike County Health Department is to increase the public's awareness about Radon, promote Radon testing and mitigation, and advance the use of radon resistant new home construction practices.***

## ***Is there Radon in Pike County?***

Yes, Studies by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and others show that Radon occurs in every county in Illinois. Pike County is one of the county's in Illinois where some homes have had elevated radon levels.

## ***Does Radon really cause lung cancer?***

Yes, Radon is a Class A carcinogen, which means there is actual evidence that exposure to Radon, over a period of years, can cause lung cancer in humans. The risk of developing lung cancer is potentially much greater with persons who **smoke**.

## ***How do I know if my home has high levels of Radon?***

You can conduct a simple Short Term Radon Test by purchasing an inexpensive short term Radon Test Kit.

The short term Radon Test takes only 3 to 7 days. You then mail the test kit to a certified lab, postage prepaid. If the test results are greater than 4pCi/L, an additional 90 day test is needed.

## ***My house doesn't have a basement, could I still have high Radon levels?***

Yes, any home can have elevated Radon levels. It doesn't matter whether your home is old or new or whether it has a basement, crawlspace, or a slab-on-grade foundation. Most Radon enters the home because of air pressure and temperature differentials between the indoors and outdoors. When air is exhausted by natural or powered ventilation, make-up air is drawn into the home through openings in the foundation from the surrounding soil. For example, if your home has a basement, a crawlspace and a slab-on-grade, with living space above each type of foundation, it will be necessary to perform a separate test in a room just above each different type of foundation.

## ***If my house has a high Radon level, is there anything I can do about it?***

Yes, indoor Radon levels can be lowered with a Radon Mitigation System installed by a Illinois Certified Radon Mitigation Contractor. The Radon Mitigation system collects Radon prior to its entry into the house and discharges it to a safe outside location.

***Short Term Radon Test Kits are available for only \$5.00 ea. From :***

**The Pike County Health Department, 113 East Jefferson, Pittsfield, IL 62363**

**Call 217-285-4407 For more information about Radon in the home**

**Additional links: [www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon) [www.radon.illinois.gov](http://www.radon.illinois.gov)**