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It's Time to Test for Radon

As we start a new year, it is important to remember that the Kansas Radon Program encourages all Kansas residents to test their homes for radon gas during the January to March timeframe. You may be asking, "What is radon and why should I worry?"

Radon is an invisible, odorless gas. Research shows that one in four homes in Kansas will test at or above the EPA's radon action level of 4.0 picoCuries per liter. Chronic, long-time exposure to elevated levels of indoor radon increases the risk of developing lung cancer. Residential radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer death in the United States, second only to smoking.

Radon gas is capable of seeping through pores in the soil into the atmosphere or the interior of a building. Radon gas entering the air quickly becomes diluted. However, when it enters a structure such as a home or basement, it becomes concentrated and dangerous. Radon can enter the home through sump pumps, cracks, joints and pipes that penetrate the walls and floors of a home.

The risk of developing lung cancer increases as the concentration and length of exposure to radon increases. Researchers believe that children may run an even greater risk from radon than adults.

The only way to know the amount of radon in your home is to test. Radon test kits are available for purchase for a small fee from your local extension office. In the Wildcat District, you can visit our offices in Altamont, Fredonia, Girard and Independence.

If your home tests at elevated levels, there are mitigation techniques available. For more information on radon, testing and mitigation, visit kansasradonprogram.org/home or call 1-800-693-5343.

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