

## January – Radon Action Month

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated January as Radon Action Month to raise awareness about Radon exposure. The City of Menasha Health Department recommends every home be tested. Over the past ten years hundreds of homes in the City of Menasha have been tested and consistently a high percentage of those homes had radon levels above the US EPA's action level of four picoCuries per Liter (4pCi/L).

Radon could be lurking in YOUR home and placing you and your family at risk for lung cancer. The U.S. Surgeon General has stated that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer for non-smokers, second only to second hand smoke. Radon is responsible for several thousand preventable lung cancer deaths each year. Breathing this invisible gas for many years in your home increases the risk of lung cancer. This odorless, colorless, tasteless radioactive gas is present naturally in the ground. It can enter homes through cracks or holes in the foundation.

Radon exposure risk is based on the radon level in the home and the amount of time a person is exposed. Radon risk is based on exposures for 15-30+ years. If a home is identified to have radon levels above the EPA limit (> 4pCi/l) and occupants are exposed for many years, the risk of lung cancer can be significant. It is especially important to test for radon if your children have lower level bedrooms or finished areas where they spend significant time. If elevated results are found in a home the good news is that it can be easily corrected. Correcting elevated levels can be as simple as putting air tight seals on sump pump crocks and sealing cracks in the basement. A professional radon company may be required to install a radon reduction system in homes with higher levels. A properly installed radon reduction system can always successfully reduce radon levels below the EPA action level of 4pCi/L. A list of proficient Wisconsin Radon Contractors is available from the Menasha Health Department.

The winter months are an optimal time to conduct home radon testing because windows and doors are kept closed. Testing is easy to perform and it is the only way to determine if a potential radon problem exists in your home. Residents should not make assumptions based on results received by surrounding homes as results can vary greatly from house to house.

Radon home test kits are available at the City of Menasha Health Department office for \$6.00. To obtain a kit please come to the Menasha Health Department at 316 Racine St, Menasha, WI. Our office hours are 8:00am to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. For further information contact Todd Drew, RS- Sanitarian, City of Menasha Health Department at (920) 967-3520.

For additional radon information, go to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services Radon web site at [www.lowradon.org](http://www.lowradon.org).