

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**Public Health - Madison & Dane County**  
**(PHMDC)**

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Jeff Golden  
(608) 243-0302

**Don't let your House become a Radon Trap**  
**Radon is Invisible, Odorless, Dangerous but**  
**Detectable**

Madison WI – January 8, 2014 - While in the grip of an arctic level cold wave most of us are spending more time inside our homes. When our houses are all closed up to keep in the heat, radon gas seeping into our homes has no place to go, and radon levels can increase.

Much of the land in Dane County has small amounts of uranium in the soil. Uranium breaks down producing radon gas and other byproducts. Radon gas, which occurs naturally, can move up through cracks and holes in the building's foundation and enter the living area of your home. It is odorless, invisible, and tasteless. Radon gas can damage your lungs and put you and your family at risk for lung cancer.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year in the U.S. About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. If you do smoke and your home has elevated radon levels, your risk of lung cancer goes up seven times. The bad news is that about 46% of the homes tested in Dane County in 2012 had levels of radon that are considered unsafe.

The good news is that there is a simple, inexpensive way to detect the presence of this invisible and harmful home invader. A low cost radon test kit (usually under \$25) can be purchased at any local hardware or home product store. Public Health also has kits available for sale at \$10.00 per kit. (See below for detailed information).

The EPA and the Surgeon General of the United States recommend that the test be done in the lowest lived in level of your home. The kits come with a pre-paid return envelope, and after the recommended amount of monitoring time, all you need to do is to send the kit to the laboratory for analysis. The lab will send you easy to read results within two or three weeks, or even earlier if you provide them with your email address.

If testing shows that you do have a radon problem, you will need to install a system that will prevent the radon from entering your home. Such systems should be installed by a certified mitigation contractor. According to Janice Block Banks, Public Health Radon Specialist, "While the cost of fixing this problem can seem high (typically \$800-\$1,200) it is a real bargain when weighed against removing the threat of lung cancer from your home".

This is why PHMDC joins the EPA during National Radon Action Month to remind the public that ignoring this hazard can have terrible consequences, so it pays to take action against this invisible and preventable threat to the health of your family.

For more information regarding radon, including a list of qualified radon remediation contractors, visit the Wisconsin Radon Information Web site at:

[www.lowradon.org](http://www.lowradon.org).

For more background on radon see the following link:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/brochure/profile\\_radon.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/brochure/profile_radon.htm)

To purchase a test kit or to speak with the Public Health Radon Specialist, call the South Central Wisconsin Radon Information Center at (608) 243-0392.

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