

# Radon Testing



## What Is Radon?

Radon is categorized by Health Canada and the Federal Provincial Territorial Radiation Protection Committee (FPTRPC) as a carcinogen and the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada. An inert, radioactive gas, radon is prevalent in many areas of North America. You cannot smell, see or taste radon.

Radon is the product of the natural radioactive breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. The gas emitted from this breakdown gets into the air you breathe. Radon can be found all over North America, and it can be present in any type of building and result in a high indoor radon level.

**The only way to learn whether your home or a home you plan to purchase has an unacceptably high level of radon is to have the home tested.**

If the home does contain an unacceptable level of radon, then a radon mitigation system can be installed to reduce the levels of radon to generally below the national standards set by Health Canada and the FPTRPC of 200 becquerels per cubic meter (Bq/m<sup>3</sup>). The organizations recommend that you take action to reduce the home's radon level if a test reveals a radon level above 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>.

## What's the Problem?

Health Canada has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in Canada today. Radon can be a problem in all types of homes and has been found in homes in every state, including old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements, and homes without basements. Local geology, construction materials, and how the home was built are among the factors that can affect radon levels in homes.

## How Can Homeowners Protect Themselves?

You should test your home for the level of radon gas present in the indoor air. If you have high radon levels, there are ways to solve the problem. Even very high levels can be reduced to acceptable levels.

## Hire a Qualified Radon Tester

It is important to obtain an accurate test. The best way to assure this is to hire a qualified professional, often a home inspector, to conduct the radon testing. A qualified tester knows the proper conditions, test devices and guidelines for obtaining reliable radon test results.

## How to Fix a Radon Problem?

There are solutions to radon problems in homes. Sealing cracks and other openings in the foundation is a basic part of most approaches to radon reduction. In most cases, a mitigation system with a vent pipe and fan is also used to reduce radon to prevent radon gas from entering the home from below the concrete floor. Qualified radon mitigation contractors should be consulted to install such systems.

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