



# HOUSE FACTS NOTES

Winter 2005

## WINTER WEATHER HOME HEALTH TIPS FROM UPSTATE HOME INSPECTION

### Keep Radon on Your Radar!!!

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in every state in the U.S, so it shouldn't be cause for concern, right? **WRONG!** Although Radon is naturally found in soil nationwide (produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water) exposure to unsafe amounts of Radon can cause serious health risks and long term consequences for you and your family. *This means that you need to have Radon on Your Radar to minimize the risk of life threatening cancer.*

#### Radon Causes Cancer

Unfortunately, the facts remain that:

- Radon is a carcinogenic gas that the Surgeon General has said is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Radon is responsible for roughly 14,000 cases of lung cancer each year.
- All major health organizations (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Lung Association and the American Medical Association) agree that Radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year.

\*\*Please note that your risk for developing lung cancer from Radon is increased exponentially if you are a smoker.

#### How Does Radon Get in My Home?

There are two common ways that Radon may enter your home. In the United States, the most common point of entry is through cracks in your home's foundation. Because the air pressure in your home is lower than the pressure in the soil surrounding the foundation, the house acts as a vacuum and sucks the gas inside. \*Inhaling Radon poses the greatest risk for lung cancer.

The second (and less common) way that Radon enters your home is through water. This typically only occurs in homes utilizing a private well, or homes where the public supply provided is ground water.

\*The risk of Radon exposure through the water is greatest by inhaling the gas released when showering, rather than through actual ingestion of the water.

### Who Should Test for Radon?

Radon is odorless and colorless so you won't be able to count on sight or smell to know if your home has a Radon problem.

**Simply put, every home needs to be tested for levels of Radon.**

**Whether you've been in the home for one year, or twenty-five years it is never too early, or too late to begin testing. It may save your life.**



Visit us today at [www.upstateinspection.com](http://www.upstateinspection.com) for all your inspection needs!

# Hurray!

## You can test for Radon yourself!

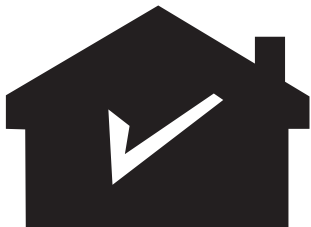
Testing for Radon is easy, inexpensive and should only take a few moments of your time. There are two easy methods for testing:

- 1 Purchase a short term testing kit. This will remain in your home for a period of 2-90 days, and will give you "preliminary results." It is recommended that you use a short term test only to get immediate responses. The short term tests will provide you with *the current levels of Radon*, and help determine if you should purchase a long term kit.
- 2 Purchase a long term testing kit. This will remain in your home for longer than 90 days. A long term testing kit will yield you more accurate results, as it will provide a *daily average of the amount of Radon* in your home. If a long term kit reveals high levels of Radon-you should take immediate action to reduce these levels.

### How Much Radon is Safe?

Radon isn't safe in any amounts, per se. However, lower levels pose a much lower health risk. The EPA recommends that **Radon levels in your home never exceed 4 pCi/L** (PicoCuries per liter of air) - the average household has levels of 1.3 pCi/L.

**With Upstate Home Inspection's Home History Program, we will test your home's Radon levels during our annual "check-up," Contact us at 518.877.0242 or via email at [dosborn@upstateinspection.com](mailto:dosborn@upstateinspection.com) for more details.**



## Upstate Home Inspection Service

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### UH-OH! My Home has High Levels of Radon!!!

Don't panic. But do act quickly. Contact a state licensed and certified Radon contractor to begin discussing how to reduce Radon in your home. A qualified Radon contractor will be able to reduce your levels by at least 50%, but possibly up to 99%, using Radon Reduction Techniques. Visit the EPA's website at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov) for detailed information about various Radon Reduction Techniques.

### Keep Radon on Your Radar in these additional circumstances:

- Before selling your home, test it for Radon- buyers generally ask about it.
- Before purchasing a new home, check Radon levels in that region-the EPA's website will help you pinpoint high zone areas.
- Test for Radon before beginning any home renovations- as disruption can lead to increased levels in your home
- If building a new home, request that your builder design a Radon resistant house.

### Always test for Radon if you find:

- Cracks in solid floors
- Misaligned construction joints
- Cracks in walls
- Gaps in suspended floors
- Gaps around service pipes
- Cavities inside walls

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