

What is radon?

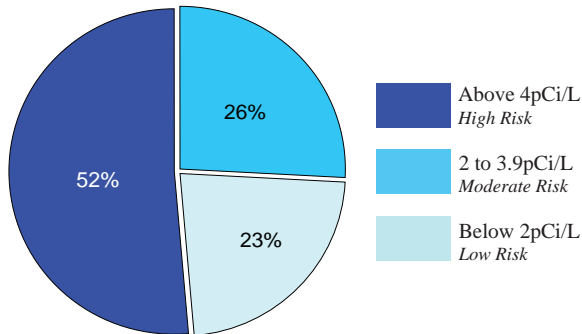
Radon is a *cancer-causing*, invisible, odorless, radioactive gas created during the natural decay of uranium and radium in the soil. All buildings contain some radon, as does outdoor air, although at very low levels. Radon gas is pulled into a home through cracks and openings in basements, crawl spaces, and slabs. Colorado's concentration levels are higher than other regions and vary from house to house.

Why is radon a concern?

According to the U.S. Surgeon General radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. This threat **is** preventable and testing for radon is easy and inexpensive. Radon gas is measured in pCi/L (pico Curies per Liter) with the national average of indoor radon levels being 1.3 pCi/L, however, there is no known safe exposure level. Smokers have a much higher risk of lung cancer if they are exposed to radon.

What are radon levels in Jefferson County?

Test results show that the average level of indoor radon in Jefferson County is 7.1 pCi/L. Don't let those numbers scare you – radon is a problem that can be fixed. Test for radon in your home!



Public Health...Everyday, Everywhere, Everyone

Locations

Golden

1801 19th Street, Golden, CO
303-271-5700

Lakewood

260 S. Kipling Street, Lakewood, CO
303-232-6301

Arvada

6303 Wadsworth Bypass, Arvada, CO
303-275-7500

Jefferson County Public Health

Arvada

Lakewood

Edgewater

Golden

(303) 232-6301

<http://health.jeffco.us>

Sept 2009

Radon

What you need to know before buying and selling a Home in Jefferson County



Jefferson County Public Health

303-271-5700

<http://health.jeffco.us>

Public Health...Everyday, Everywhere, Everyone

How do I test for radon?

There are two approaches to measure radon:

1. Test it yourself. JCPH Environmental Health Services sells short-term radon testing kits for \$10.00 at our Golden location during regular business hours. Call 303-271-5714 or email jmoody@jeffco.us.
2. Hire a professional tester. JCDHE recommends using a professional certified by the National Environmental Health Association (www.radongas.org) or the National Radon Safety Board (www.nrsb.org). Radon professionals can also be found in the phone book under Radon Testing or Radon Mitigation.

Short-term test kits



These measure radon for 3-7 days – a good choice if you need a quick radon test. This is a “snapshot” of the radon levels during the test period. Radon levels vary with the season, barometric pressure, wind, and whether windows are open or closed.

Long-term test kits



These measure radon for three months to a year – a good choice to find the average level of radon in your home. Use long-term test results after you move in to decide whether to install a radon reduction system. These kits can be found at most local hardware stores.



New Homes and radon

If you are buying a home in Jefferson County built in 2005 or later, radon-resistant new construction methods may have been incorporated (building codes may vary by city so be sure to check with your municipality). This system uses passive ventilation and provides for easy addition of a radon exhaust fan, if needed. Testing has shown the passive system reduces radon by half, on average. You should conduct a radon test, and install a fan if radon levels are unacceptable.

Existing homes and radon

No matter what the age of your future home, take time to test radon levels. What if your dream home has high radon levels? If you like a home, buy it – radon can be reduced! Of all the problems that a house can have, radon is one of the most easy to identify and fix. You can fix it before you buy or after you move in.

What areas in Colorado are high in radon?

Although there are maps indicating areas of higher potential, they are not precise enough to determine whether or not a home will have concentrations in excess 4.0 pCi/L. The only way to know for sure is to test.

Will a test be done automatically when I buy?

There is no law requiring radon testing at the time of resale. However, it is recommended that you request a radon test when you have the home inspected,

How can radon levels be reduced?

Radon levels can be reduced by installing a radon mitigation system. A plastic pipe is connected to the soil beneath a slab, basement, or crawl space floor and then extended above the roof. An in-line fan draws radon and other soil gases up the pipe and exhausts them harmlessly outdoors. Incidentally, this system can also help dry out a damp basement, because it draws out humidity as well as radon.

Is radon mitigation required?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) *recommends* homes be mitigated if the radon level is 4 pCi/L or more. Since there is no known safe exposure level, the EPA also recommends you consider mitigating your home for radon levels between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L.

