Radon in Rental Housing
A Serious Hidden Danger to Family Health

Radon Tipsheet #11

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Renting a home with high radon levels is a major risk for lung cancer.

Radon is the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer. Any home, including rental housing, can have a radon problem. It doesn't matter if it's old or new, or where it's located. High levels of radon gas occur naturally in Maine soil and water, and can move up into a house from the ground. The house then traps the radon in the air inside.

The only way to know if a home has a problem is to test. Landlords in Maine are required to test their rental properties for radon by March 1, 2014. This tipsheet can help you understand how radon testing in rental housing works.

About Radon Testing in Rental Housing

Maine requires radon testing in all residential rental properties by March 1, 2014, and unless a mitigation system is installed, a tenant can request a re-test every 10 years.

Simple air tests can show whether radon levels are safe. Radon tests can be done by the landlord, the tenant occupying the unit, or a Maine registered radon tester. All radon tests must be done according to approved protocols which require the radon test devices to be placed in the basement or in ground floor units, and in some upper floor units.

What Tenants Need to Do

- Do not touch, move, cover or otherwise interfere with the testing devices.
- For 12 hours before, and all during the test, keep windows and doors closed, except for normal entry and exit.
- IMPORTANT: If the test is not done the right way it must be done again, costing time and money for the landlord and tenant.
- Your landlord must show you the results for your residence. If your residence was not tested, you will get the results from the basement or the highest result found in your building.

About High Radon Levels

A radon concentration of 4 pCi/l (picocuries per liter) or above is a high radon level. If there is a high radon level in your building, fixing this problem is recommended but not required. If the radon problem isn't fixed, the landlord or tenant can end the lease with at least 30 days notice.

If the radon problem will be fixed, the work must be done by a registered radon reduction contractor, called a radon mitigator. Radon mitigators can install the proper system to make sure that your home and all the others in your building have safe radon levels.

Radon treatment systems work well to bring the level down to safer levels, no matter how high the levels are to start.

Follow-Up Testing

Once your building has a radon mitigation system, there will be another radon test and there may be periodic re-tests to make sure the system is working.

Protect your family. Learn. Test. Treat if needed.

- Check this website: **www.MaineRadiationControl.org**
- For advice: 1-800-232-0842 • **radon.dhhs@maine.gov** • TTY: Call Maine Relay 711