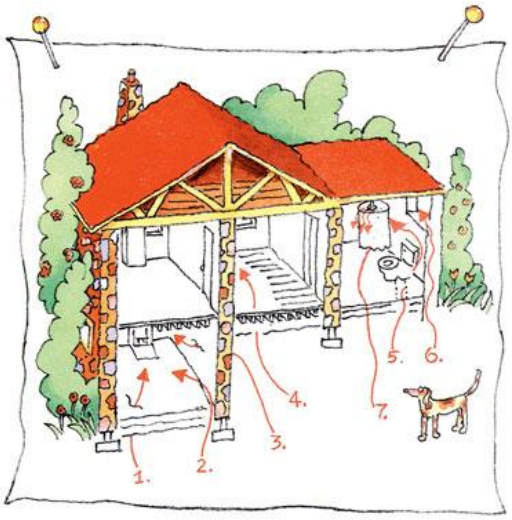
Radon is unfortunately, a reality for people living in Southwest Minnesota. Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the natural decay of uranium that is found in nearly all soils. It typically moves up through the ground to the air above and into your home through cracks and other holes in the foundation. Your home traps radon inside, where it can build up. Any home may have a radon problem. This means new and old homes, well-sealed and drafty homes, and homes with or without basements.

How Does Radon Get Into Your Home?

Any home may have a radon problem



RADON GETS IN THROUGH:

1. Cracks in solid floors
2. Construction joints
3. Cracks in walls
4. Gaps in suspended floors
5. Gaps around service pipes
6. Cavities inside walls
7. The water supply

Testing is easy and should only take a few minutes of your time.

There are several ways you can test for radon.

1. Buy a kit: Radon Test Kits can be found online at the Minnesota Department of Health website: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/indoorair/radon/rncontacts.html
2. Stop by your local Menards or Walmart and ask for a test kit that can be set up in home (cost between $15-$30)
3. Find a Radon Test Kit or Mitigation Professional: http://www.epa.gov/radon

Radon gas decays into radioactive particles that can get trapped in your lungs when you breathe. As they break down further, these particles release small bursts of energy. This can damage lung tissue and lead to lung cancer over the course of your lifetime. Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop lung cancer. And the amount of time between exposure and the onset of the disease may be many years.

Smoking combined with radon is an especially serious health risk. To reduce your risk of lung cancer, stop smoking and test for radon in your home.

Radon Myths

MYTH: Radon affects only certain kinds of homes.

FACT: House construction can affect radon levels. However, radon can be a problem in homes of all types: old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements, homes without basements. Local geology, construction materials, and how the home was built are among factors that determine if radon is found in the home.

Contact the Office of Environment to learn more about Radon