

Department of Health

Environmental Health
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HealthVermont.gov

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Agency of Human Services

Dear School Nurse and School Administrator,

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas present in soil and bedrock that enters and accumulates in buildings. It is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Exposure to radon is thought to account for an estimated 50 lung cancer deaths per year in Vermont.

Testing for radon is the only way to know what level of radon school personnel and students are exposed to. The Health Department's Radon Program performs free radon screenings each winter for schools in Vermont. As of April 2016, 10 out of the 73 Vermont public schools tested (13.6%) had screening results at or above the EPA's action level of 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). Radon concentrations as high as 20.0 pCi/L have been detected in Vermont schools. six schools have worked with the Health Department to install radon mitigation systems to address elevated radon levels. An additional two schools have reduced radon levels through routine maintenance practices including sealing cracks and optimizing the school's existing ventilation system.

Based on prior testing results, we estimate that there are more than 20 additional Vermont public schools with have elevated radon concentrations that have not yet tested.

To have your school tested for radon:

1. Contact the Vermont Department of Health's Department Radon Program to sign up for a free radon screening (call 1-800-439-8550 or email radon@vermont.gov).
2. Contact a certified radon measurement provider. A list of certified measurement providers can be found at <http://aarst-nrpp.com/wp/database-search/> by searching for "Measurement Providers" in "Vermont."

Thank you for helping us increase awareness of and reduce risks associated with radon exposure.

Sincerely,

Michelle Reddinger, Public Health Industrial Hygienist
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Cc:

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