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Team Infinity Sweeps Radon Poster Contest

January is Radon Action Month

Test, Fix and Breathe Easy

BURLINGTON – When it comes to making sure Vermonters understand the importance of getting homes tested for radon gas, the students in Daryl Kuhn’s science class are right on it.

The 7th and 8th grade “Team Infinity” students at Edmunds Middle School in Burlington submitted their artwork for this year’s Radon Poster Contest and received first, second and third prize, as well as honorable mention.

The first-place poster, “Radon on Your Radar?” created by Addie, age 12, earned a spot along with the second and third place finishers in a national competition conducted by the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors. All participants receive a certificate signed by Vermont Health Commissioner Harry Chen, MD.

January is National Radon Action Month, and the poster contest sponsored by the Vermont Department of Health offers elementary and middle school students a chance to use art to help spread the word about the dangers of radon. “I like to find real world connections for students, and give them an audience outside of school,” said Daryl Kuhn, Team Infinity’s teacher. “The contest was a great way to introduce the concept and dangers of radon gas.”

Approximately one in every eight houses in Vermont has elevated levels of radon – a naturally occurring radioactive gas that seeps into homes from soil and bedrock. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, and a smoker’s risk of getting lung cancer from radon is almost six times greater than that of a non-smoker. It is estimated that 50 Vermonters die each year due to radon-related lung cancer.

According to Health Commissioner Chen, the only way to know if a house has elevated levels of radon is to have it tested. “You can’t smell it, see it or taste it, so unless you test for it you won’t

know if you are breathing radon gas,” said Dr. Chen. “The kids do a great job making it easy to understand why it’s important to test for radon.”

The Health Department offers free radon test kits to Vermonters. To request your free kit, send an email with your name, mailing and physical address and phone number to radon@vermont.gov or call 1-800-439-8550. Health officials recommend homes be tested every five years and after major renovation work, especially if it involved disturbing the foundation or underlying bedrock.

The radon posters created by the students are shared with the department’s 12 local health offices, and through the Agency of Education with school science teachers throughout the state. Their work is also showcased at Vermont home show and related building conferences. The department is working to involve more schools for next year.

See the winning posters at <http://healthvermont.gov/media/av-library/image/radon-poster-contest-winners-2017>.

For more information about radon, radon testing and mitigation, visit <http://healthvermont.gov/radon>

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