

Department of Health

Environmental Health
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HealthVermont.gov

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Agency of Human Services

Dear School Staff,

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas present in soil and bedrock that enters and accumulates in buildings. Exposure to radon accounts for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States. It is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Radon is thought to account for approximately 50 deaths per year in Vermont.

As we approach the 2020 National Radon Poster Contest, I would like to invite your students ages 9 to 14 to participate. The National Radon Poster Contest, judged by the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, promotes the artist's education about radon and raises awareness among those who see their poster.

For most children and school staff, the second largest contributor to their radon exposure is likely to be their school. Over 13% of Vermont schools that have tested for radon since 2005 have found radon levels at or above the EPA action level, with some as high as five times the action level.

This would be a great activity for a science, art or health class for students. Artwork from winning posters will be used to promote radon testing in Vermont over the coming year and everyone that participates will receive a certificate of participation signed by the Commissioner of Health. **The deadline for submission to the Vermont Department of Health Radon Program is May 29, 2020.** Enclosed is a packet with details about the Poster Contest.

Learning about radon can be a great educational opportunity for students, and it can help them to learn how to reduce risks found in their environment. If you are looking for additional ways to incorporate this contest into your curriculum, please contact the Radon Program. Thank you for helping us to reduce radon risks and protect the health of Vermonters.

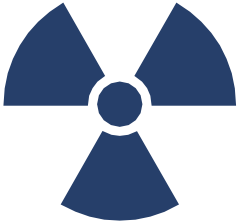
Sincerely,



Michelle Thompson, MPH
Public Health Industrial Hygienist
Vermont Department of Health – Environmental Health Division
108 Cherry Street, PO Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402

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www.healthvermont.gov/radon





The Cause: Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that has no color, smell or taste. Breathing air with radon increases a person's risk of getting lung cancer. In fact, it is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Radon moves through the ground to the surface and can easily enter homes and buildings. There is no way to know the amount of radon present unless it is tested.

The Goal: Raise Awareness

Elevated levels of indoor radon gas are a problem. The solution is to reduce the number of homes with elevated levels of radon. This contest is designed to raise awareness for radon testing and inform people of the danger of radon in their homes.

The Prize: Recognition

Health Department judges select winners and runners-up for Vermont. Winners will be recognized in Vermont, and the posters will be reproduced and distributed to promote radon awareness. Winning posters are entered in a national contest judged by the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors.

Eligibility Requirements:

Children ages 9 to 14 are eligible to participate. They can participate through school or through a sponsoring club, such as an art, computer or science club; scouting organization; or 4-H club.

Contest Calendar:

Submissions must be made by **May 29, 2020** to the Vermont Radon Program at:

Vermont Department of Health
Environmental Health Division – Radon Program
108 Cherry Street, PO Box 70
Burlington, VT 05402

Poster Topics:

- What is radon?
- Where does radon come from?
- How does radon get into our homes?
- Radon can cause lung cancer.
- Test your home for radon.
- Radon and smoking: a risky combination

Judging Criteria:

- Content accuracy
- Visual communication of topic
- Reproducibility (large letters, good contrast)
- Originality
- Proper spelling (e.g. radon is an odorless gas, not an oderless gas)

Artwork Requirements:

Artwork must meet the following requirements:

- Paper sizes of 8.5 x 11 or 12 x 18 are preferred, but all submission sizes will be accepted
- Needs to be original
- Must not have student's name on the front
- Topic and title must be on the artwork submission form
- Can be created with crayon, markers, paint (watercolor, tempera, acrylic), collage, photographs or computer graphics
- Copyrighted characters (such as Snoopy), product logos and trademarked or brand names cannot be used.
- Lettering and message should be large enough to reproduce well.



Artwork Submission Form – 2020 Vermont Radon Poster Contest

Important Note to Teachers and Leaders: Please fill in (type or print) the requested information under the Teacher/Leader section before making copies of this form for your students. Please ask your students to **clearly print** their information.

Teacher/Leader

Name _____
Name of School/Organization _____ Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Local Newspaper _____

Student

Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____ Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Title of Artwork _____

Check your poster topic or topics:

- What is radon?
- Where does radon come from?
- How does radon get into our homes?
- Radon can cause lung cancer.
- Test your home for radon.
- Radon and smoking: a risky combination.
- Other radon topics

Please tape this form to the back of the poster. The parents of winning participants will be asked to sign a release form allowing the Health Department to use their child's artwork. If you have any questions, please e-mail radon@vermont.gov or contact the Radon Program at 1 (800) 439-8550.