

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Otter Tail County Public Health recommends testing your home for radon

January 3, 2023 – Otter Tail County, MN– Otter Tail County, MN–Radon is the leading environmental cause of cancer deaths in the United States and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. More than 21,000 lung cancer deaths are attributed to radon each year in the U.S. About 2 in 5 homes in Minnesota have dangerous levels of radon. Otter Tail County Public Health recommends every home be tested.

Radon is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally in Minnesota soils. It can enter all kinds of homes through cracks or openings in walls or foundations. The only way for residents to know if their home has radon is to test.

“I would encourage everyone to test their homes for radon,” explained Andrea Demmer, Otter Tail County Environmental Health Sanitarian, “It is important to be aware of anything in your home’s environment that could potentially lead to health concerns and to ensure that radon mitigation is in place if necessary.”

Fortunately, the risk is largely preventable by testing homes and fixing radon problems. A radon test is the only way to find out how much radon is in your home and if you and your family are at risk. Performing a radon test on your own is easy, inexpensive, and takes only a few minutes of your time. The results of a properly performed radon test will help determine if you need to take further action to protect yourself from the health risks of radon.

Testing can be done year-round; however, the best time to test is during the winter when doors and windows are closed. Radon kits may be picked up at the Public Health office Monday through Friday 8:00 – 4:00 in Fergus Falls and New York Mills. The completed test is mailed, in the provided postage-paid envelope, to Air Check, a radon testing company based in North Carolina. The results are sent via email to the homeowner free of charge. An instructional video on how to complete the test is available on the Public Health webpage: ottertailcountymn.us/radon.

Tests should be done in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied. If your home’s level is at or above 4 pCi/L, you should consider verification testing and having a radon mitigation system installed. Anyone interested in mitigating his or her home for radon should consult the MN

Department of Health’s list of radon mitigation professionals:

health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/radon/mitigation

For more information on radon visit ottertailcountymn.us or health.state.mn.us/radon.

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