

Testing for Radon in your home is important! Here's why.

Radon is a known carcinogen. Humans breathe in Radon gas all the time. However, breathing in higher levels for long periods of time can lead to lung cancer. According to the MA Department of Public Health, Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in people who have never smoked and the second leading cause of lung cancer overall. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If you are exposed to elevated levels of radon and, especially if you smoke, your risk increases further.

Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop cancer, however the risk increases as the exposure increases. Radon can occur in ANY home, old or new. Radon is a radioactive gas produced when uranium, thorium and radium break down naturally in rocks, soils, and groundwater. The gas is drawn up from the ground to indoor spaces through cracks and seams in basements and crawl spaces, sump pumps and floor drains. Radon can also be found in water from underground sources, such as a private well. It's odorless, colorless, and tasteless. There's simply no way to know it's there unless you test for it.

The MA Department of Public Health Indoor Air Quality Program has found that higher than normal radon levels can be fixed in most cases. There are mitigation systems available to significantly reduce the rate at which radon enters the home. The first step is to test! Air testing is simple, fast, and inexpensive.

Your home is one of your most important investments. According to the MA Dept. of Public Health there are no regulations in place to protect owners of existing homes from radon exposure. If you choose to stay in your home long term, protecting yourself and your family from higher-than-normal radon levels by testing and monitoring can give you peace of mind. If you later chose to sell your home, you can proudly share with realtors and prospective buyers that you've taken the best care of your property from the ground up. Routine Radon testing and monitoring will add value to your home whether you stay or choose to sell. Testing and taking steps to lower radon levels when necessary is the key right now!

Elder Services AmeriCorps Seniors are conducting radon testing now through March 30. The test costs just \$35 and can be scheduled by calling 508-394-4630 x 524.

Massachusetts is not ranked as one of the top five states with the greatest radon levels, but it should still be on your radar. The EPA recommends annual testing no matter where you live.

Learn more about Radon exposure here

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/11/uw/radon-fact-sheet-2016.pdf>

Learn more about states affected by Radon here

<https://www.aprilaire.com/blog/states-affected-by-radon-ranked/>