



Radon and Schools: What You Need to Know

- Radon is a **radioactive gas** that can be found in various buildings, including schools, homes, and offices. It forms by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water.
- Radon exposure is the **second leading cause of lung cancer deaths** in the United States, second only to smoking.
- A nationwide survey of radon levels in schools estimates that **nearly 1 in 5 schools has at least one schoolroom with a high short-term radon levels.**
- The EPA recommends that all schools nationwide be tested for radon. **To date, approximately 20% of schools nationwide have done some kind of testing.**
- Currently, eleven states have passed some type of legislation addressing radon in schools. PA is not included.

Investigating Radon Levels

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that can enter buildings from the surrounding soil or from underground water wells.

Because it is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas, the only way to find out if there are higher than acceptable levels of radon in your school or home is through testing.

Fortunately, there are proven effective ways to correct radon leaks inside buildings. To learn more about radon testing and treatment visit the Environmental Protection Agency at:

<http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/schoolrn.html>

What You Can Do:

- Contact your school's administration office about conducting radon tests during the cooler months of the year and in all occupied rooms on or near ground level.
- Educate your community about the need for radon testing in the school setting, as well as investigating radon in local homes and offices.
- Take short-term tests initially and follow up with long-term tests in rooms with levels higher than 4 pCi/L (the suggested limit of radon).
- Consult the Federal Radon Action Plan for ideas on how to treat radon levels in various buildings. Find the guide at: http://www.epa.gov/radon/action_plan.html



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