



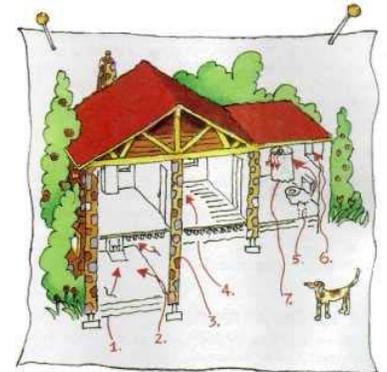
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Home Radon Testing Program

The Greenwich Department of Health continues to be concerned about the increased risk of developing lung cancer in persons who are exposed to elevated levels of radon in their homes. Radon is an odorless, colorless radioactive gas that occurs in nature and is common in our area. The longer the exposure to this gas, the greater the risk of developing lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after tobacco use.

Lung cancer can result when the radon decay products become trapped in the lungs; as these products break down further, radiation is released which is capable of damaging lung tissue, leading to cancer.

Radon can pass through small spaces in the rock on which a house is built, and also can seep into the home through dirt floors and cracks in walls. It can enter the water in private wells and be released into a home when the water is used. Even if your home has been tested for radon in the past, it is important to retest, especially if your home has undergone any construction or renovations.



The Greenwich Department of Health encourages all residents to test their homes for radon, both in the air and in drinking water obtained from private wells. Distribution water from Aquarion (a.k.a. “town water”) does not contain radon and does not need to be tested. Many of the environmental health issues we are faced with are problems with which we have little or no control. Fortunately, in the case of radon, we can take full advantage of all that is known about its health effects and test for it.



To test for radon levels in your home, visit the Department of Health Laboratory on the ground floor of Town Hall, tel. 203-622-7843. The Laboratory personnel will show you how to sample for radon.

To test for radon in air, place the measuring device in the lowest level of your house suitable for occupancy. Open the device by turning the top counter clockwise to release the spring. Be sure to record the time and date on the form provided. Leave the device for four days, ten inches above the floor and at least four inches from away from a wall. Close the device by pushing the spring down and turning the top clockwise to screw it in place. Record the time and date and return it to the laboratory.

Radon in water is easily sampled in small vials obtained from the lab, taken in a bowl in the sink with the water slowly filling it up. Complete instructions will be given by the laboratory staff when the customer comes to get the vials.

Results will be mailed to you in three to five working days. If your radon level is high, the results will be accompanied by a list of state-approved radon remediation companies. One free re-test will be offered if the result for radon in air is >4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter). If you have questions about radon or the sampling procedure, please contact the laboratory at 203-622-7843.

The average indoor radon level in the Town of Greenwich has been found to be 4.5 pCi/L or greater, which is above the EPA recommended action level of 4.0 pCi/L. The average concentration of radon in outdoor air is 0.4 pCi/L.

Some radon in water levels in Greenwich have been found to be above the State of Connecticut action level of 5000 pCi/L. Not enough data is available yet to calculate the average level in the town.



For Additional Radon Information:

EPA Radon website: www.epa.gov/radon

State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, Indoor Radon Program:
www.ct.gov/dph/radon 860-509-7367

Town of Greenwich Department of Health, Division of Environmental Health: 203-622-7838

National Radon Hotline: 800-55-RADON (1-800-557-2366)