



NEWS RELEASE

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State Health Department Urges North Dakotans To Test Their Homes for Radon

BISMARCK, N.D. – In conjunction with *Home Indoor Air Quality Month*, the North Dakota Department of Health is urging residents to test their homes for radon and to fix any radon problems that are discovered.

Governor Jack Dalrymple has proclaimed October 2011 as *Home Indoor Air Quality Month* to encourage North Dakotans to learn more about indoor air quality issues, including radon. Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas formed when uranium in the soil breaks down. Prolonged exposure to high levels of radon gas can cause cancer. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), radon causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States.

“Because you can’t see or smell radon, people tend to ignore the possibility that radon may pose a problem in their homes,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “However, radon is a serious health hazard that – once discovered through testing – can be fixed easily.”

All counties in North Dakota have a high potential for elevated levels of radon. The EPA recommends taking corrective action if you have levels of 4.0 pCi/L or higher. Sixty-three percent of all North Dakota homes test over the action level of 4.0pCi/L.

Testing homes for radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits that meet EPA guidelines are available at local public health units, the American Lung Association of North Dakota, hardware stores or online. Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors or the “do-it-yourselfer.” A list of contractors can be found at www.ndhealth.gov/AQ/IAQ/RADON/Radon%20Contractors.pdf.

For more information, contact Justin Otto, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.5188.

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