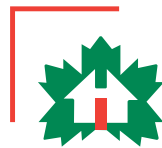




Interior Health



CANADIAN
HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION
CENTRAL OKANAGAN

RADON IN YOUR NEW HOME



Test your home for radon today

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: RADON

Q: What is radon?

A: Radon is a radioactive gas that you cannot see, taste, or smell.

Q: Where is radon found?

A: Radon comes from the ground and may be found in materials such as gravel used in concrete. All buildings contain radon. In the Interior of B.C., we have areas where nearly 60% of homes tested above the Canadian Guideline of 200 Bq/m³.

Q: How does radon get indoors?

A: Throughout the year, radon takes the easiest path into buildings through rock and dirt, concrete floors and foundation seams. Heating and ventilation systems will influence radon levels potentially higher or lower. During the cooler months when our windows and doors stay closed, radon can easily get trapped in our homes, increasing concentration.

Q: Is radon harmful?

A: Yes. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer for people who do not smoke. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer for people who do smoke.

Q: How do I know my radon level?

A: **Testing is the only way to know your radon level.** Long-term testing should be done within the first heating season after the house is occupied.

Q: How do I test for radon?

A: Purchase a long-term test kit (minimum 91-day) or obtain an electronic monitor and test for a minimum of 91 days. Set up your long-term radon detector for at least 91 days in the lowest level of the building that would normally be occupied greater than four hours per day (e.g. basement).

Q: When is the best time of year to test for radon?

Test during the cold months (i.e. November - March) when concentrations levels are likely to be the highest.

Q: How do I lower my radon levels?

A: Installing an active fan mitigation system is the best and most permanent method for reducing radon. It allows the radon to be collected from below the slab and released outside, where it is not a health concern.

Temporary fixes to reduce radon levels include opening multiple windows for ventilation flow-through. Limit time spent indoors with high radon (generally basements) until permanent fixes are undertaken.

Permanent fixes include installing an active sub-slab radon mitigation system (or activating the rough-in works with a fan), sealing cracks, joints, and openings in foundation floors and walls and around pipes and drains, keeping drain traps primed, increasing the amount of fresh air entering your home, and adjusting HVAC (Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning) and/or HRV (Heat Recovery Ventilator) systems.

A Certified Radon Professionals can assist you!

Q: What does the BC Building Code require?

A: All new builds are required to have part of the radon mitigation system installed. A sub-slab rough-in radon vent pipe provides the basic infrastructure for a future mitigation system. This does **not** mean you have a functioning radon mitigation system. **Further mitigation work (e.g., completion and activation of the fan system) will be necessary to lower levels, if you test high for radon.**

September 2024

HOME BUILDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The BC Building Code requires all new builds to be built with:

- An effective air barrier system
- Appropriate sub-slab radon rough-in piping
- Piping extension to outside air

The purpose of a sub-slab radon rough-in vent pipe allows for easy, cost-effective mitigation, by fan activation, without breaking up the slab after construction is complete.

Testing is the only way to know your radon levels

Remember to re-test for radon:

- After renovations
- After making any energy-efficient changes
- After making mechanical changes or adjustments to your HVAC (Heating Ventilation Air Conditioning) or HRV (Heat Recovery Ventilator) systems, potentially changing the air flow, pressure, ventilation, dilution and/or pressure
- To know if your mitigation worked
- Re-test **every 3 to 5 years**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Homeowners should **test their home for radon** post construction and occupancy. Conduct a **long-term (91-day minimum) test** during the first winter season.

If your home has high radon levels, **connect and activate a fan to the sub-slab radon rough-in piping**. Then **re-test** radon levels to ensure mitigation worked.

Installing and activating a fan turns the sub-slab radon rough-in into an active sub-slab depressurization system, and mitigates radon.

It is recommended to reduce radon levels to as low as reasonably achievable below respective guidelines. The World Health Organization recommends buildings with radon levels above 100 Bq/m³ receive action to lower the levels. Most homes can be reduced to levels well below 100 Bq/m³.

TO PURCHASE A KIT:

Kits are available for purchase online, and at some hardware stores. **Long-term kits (91-day minimum) are recommended.**



takeactiononradon.ca

bclung.ca/radon



1-800-665-LUNG (5864)

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit our website to find links to other resources including:

Interior Health - Radon Gas

[BCCDC Radon Map](#)

[BC Lung Foundation](#)

[Health Canada](#)

[Take Action on Radon](#)

[Mike Holmes on Radon \(video\)](#)

[Canadian - National Radon Proficiency Program \(C-NRPP\): Find a Professional](#)

Contact the Healthy
Community Development
Team today at
[**hbe@interiorhealth.ca**](mailto:hbe@interiorhealth.ca)