Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas that you can’t see, smell or taste. Testing is the only way to know if radon is present in your home.

Radon
High levels of radon gas occur naturally in New Hampshire soil and water. It is produced by the breakdown of radioactive elements and can move up into a house from the ground. Well water that contains radon may also increase the level of radon in indoor air. Activities like taking showers, doing laundry or running the dishwasher can release radon dissolved in water into the air. The amount of radon in a home depends on many factors including geology, construction, mechanical systems and the way the building is used.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. When purchasing a new home, testing the home’s air and water for radon is recommended.

Add Radon Testing to Your Home Buying Checklist
Any house can have a radon problem. It doesn’t matter if it’s old or new, or where it’s located.

• If you are buying a house, you have the right to ask for radon air and well water tests as part of a purchase agreement.
• If you are selling a house, it’s wise to expect these requests.

There is no requirement in New Hampshire for those professionals testing for radon to be certified but it is recommended to use a nationally certified radon measurement professional, especially if a real estate transaction is involved. Nationally certified radon measurement professionals can be found at the following websites:
  • National Radon Proficiency Program
  • National Radon Safety Board

New Hampshire requires sellers to notify buyers about the presence of radon gas. If the house was tested before it was put up for sale, the buyer should ask for test results and the seller must disclose those results.

If results are more than 2 years old, new tests should be done.

Testing for Radon in the Home You Are Buying
Testing for radon is the only way of knowing whether it is present in a home. This can be included as a part of the home inspection. Contact the NH State Radon Program for information on how to obtain testing from a certified professional with specific skills required to successfully complete radon testing.

Radon Action Levels - There is no known safe level of exposure to radon. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that Americans fix their home if the radon level is 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter) or higher.

• If your radon in air test result is at or above 4.0 pCi/L, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS) recommends contacting a certified radon mitigation contractor to help reduce radon levels in your home.
• If your radon in air test result is between 2.0 and 4.0 pCi/L, both the EPA and NH DHHS recommend considering mitigation since radon levels in this range can still increase the risk of lung cancer.
If your radon in air levels are at or above the action level, and your water comes from a well, testing your water for radon may help you in determining the most effective way to reduce radon in air levels in your home. Sometimes water can contribute to radon to the air in a home and needs to be treated.

- NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) recommends routine well testing every 3-5 years (except for bacteria and nitrates, which should checked annually). To understand your test results and water treatment options, visit NHDES “Be Well Informed” website, call (603) 271-1513 or email dwghinfo@des.nh.gov.

- NHDES strongly recommends that homeowners with private wells with radon concentrations at or above 10,000 pCi/L install treatment for the water in conjunction with mitigation of indoor air radon. For private wells with radon concentrations between 2,000 and 10,000 pCi/L, the treatment of water may be advisable if air concentrations in the home exceed 4 pCi/L.

Once radon levels have been tested, the person selling the home will need to disclose this information to potential buyers going forward.

Reducing Radon in the home

Radon problems can be fixed. Once you know your radon numbers, you can plan the next steps. In most homes, current methods make it possible to get air and well water levels below current safety guidelines.

The best way to reduce the levels of radon in air is to install a radon mitigation system. A “certified mitigation specialist” should be called to install a system that fixes the problem. In most cases, this system involves drilling a hole in the basement floor and installing a vent pipe and a fan to reduce radon entry into the home.

When a mitigation system is installed, it’s important to make sure it’s doing its job. Check the radon levels 24 hours after mitigation, retest radon levels every two years, and routinely check the mitigation system. The system should be effective at reducing radon down to less than 2 pCi/L.

Contact the New Hampshire Radon Program for a list of certified radon in air mitigation contractors based in New Hampshire, or visit: certifiedradonpros.org/nh.html

NOTE: The State of New Hampshire does not license or endorse radon mitigation professionals. These radon mitigation contractors are certified through their respective professional organizations.

Protect your family.
Learn. Test. Treat.

📞 Call: (603) 271-1708
✉️ Email: radon@dhhs.nh.gov
🌐 Visit: bit.ly/RadonProgramNH

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