

PENNINGTON & RED LAKE COUNTIES WELLNESS COALITION NEWSLETTER October 2014

Protecting Yourself and Your Family from Radon

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas. You can't see radon. And you can't smell it or taste it. But it may be a problem in your home.

The Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths. If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is especially high.

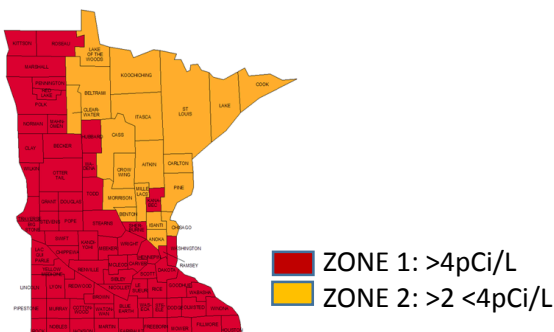
Radon comes from the natural (radioactive) breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air you breathe. Radon can be found all over the U.S. It can get into any type of building — homes, offices, and schools — and result in a high indoor radon level. But you and your family are most likely to get your greatest exposure at home, where you spend most of your time.

There are two main sources for the radon in your home's indoor air, the soil and the water supply. Compared to radon entering the home through water, radon entering your home through the soil is usually a much larger risk. Radon Gets In Through: Cracks in solid floors or walls; construction joints, gaps in suspended floors, gaps around service pipes, cavities inside walls, and the water supply.

Testing is the only way to know if you and your family are at risk from radon. See more information at: <http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/citguide.html>

How serious a problem is radon in Minnesota?

High radon levels exist in every state in the US. In Minnesota, two in five homes have radon levels that pose a significant health risk, and nearly 80% of counties are rated High Radon zones.



Some factors that further contribute to Minnesota's high radon levels include:

- Minnesota's geology produces an ongoing supply of radon.
- Minnesota's climate affects how our homes are built and operate.

The average indoor radon levels of **Pennington County**, as determined by radon test results from [Air Chek, Inc](#), is **5.7 pCi/L**

The average indoor radon levels of **Red Lake County**, as determined by radon test results from [Air Chek, Inc](#), is **5.3 pCi/L**

Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) which is a unit that measures levels of radon/radioactive gas. The Environmental Protection Agency and Minnesota Department of Health set the recommended action level for radon at 4.0 pCi/L.

Above 4 pCi/L : Fix your house;

2 pCi/L to 4 pCi/L : Consider fixing your house

Effective January 1, 2014, the Minnesota Radon Awareness Act requires additional disclosure and education be provided to potential home buyers during residential real estate transactions in Minnesota. Before signing a purchase agreement to sell or transfer residential real property, the seller shall disclose in writing to the buyer any knowledge the seller has of radon concentrations in the dwelling. For requirements of the disclosure and more information please see the brochure "Radon: Keeping Your Home Safe" on the Minnesota Dept. of Health website: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/indoorair/radon/> The Minnesota Radon Awareness Act does NOT require radon testing or mitigation. However, many relocation companies and lending institutions, as well as home buyers, require a radon test when purchasing a house.

Tweets from our Teens
Correction in Twitter address:
Twitter-@ Red.Penn3

Teens Exchange Cigarettes For Flavored Cigarillos

Teen smoking overall is down. That's the good news. The bad news is that more teenagers are smoking flavored mini-cigars like strawberry, watermelon, vanilla, and chocolate, and are wrapped in colorful packages. And they're becoming popular partly because young smokers think they look more attractive than regular cigars, but also because teens believe they are less addictive and they are cheap.

From Kane County Chronicle: "You have the same cancer-causing chemicals but wrapped in flavors that don't let you experience the harsh sensation of cigar or tobacco use," said Donald Shell, interim director for Maryland's Center for Health Promotion, Education, Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation.

How Many Teenagers Are Smoking? From The Washington Post: Nationally, cigar smoking is the second-most-common form of tobacco use among youth, after cigarettes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About 14 percent of high school students smoke cigars (18.6 percent among boys; 8.8 percent among girls), according to 2009 CDC data.

But in some states, cigar smoking among some youth groups is more popular than cigarette smoking. In Maryland, another state where the number of young people smoking little cigars has soared, officials are fighting back. Starting next week, the state will launch ads on billboards, buses and trains. The home page of the campaign Web site, thecigartrap.com, shows youngsters running to an ice cream truck with a giant cigar on its roof. "No matter how they sugarcoat it . . . cigars kill," a warning reads.

Tobacco Manufacturers Trying To Hook Young People? Could this be another ploy by tobacco companies to recruit more customers? They understand well that hooking young people to their products early on will probably make them a life-long addict. The Food and Drug Administration banned flavored cigarettes in 2009, but no such ban applies to cigars. Selling tobacco products to anyone younger than 18 is illegal, but of course not all stores check identification. Are tobacco manufactures exploiting this loophole in the federal ban on flavored cigarettes?

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/causes/teens-exchanging-cigarettes-for-flavored-cigars.html#ixzz3Dm1PWNXA>

Smoke Free Multi-Unit Housing

Please share with apartment owners and managers:



Live Smoke Free and the Public Health Law Center will be holding two webinars in November for property managers and owners interested in smoke-free policy adoption, policy expansion, and learning more about emerging topics like electronic cigarettes and medical marijuana in multi-unit housing. The webinars are being co-sponsored by a number of SHIP grants near the Twin Cities, however since the sessions will be web-based they have opened it up to managers outside those areas who are interested.

***What: Smoke-Free Housing: All Your Questions Answered Webinar** *When: **November 12 AND November 18** (content will be the same on both days) *Time: **12-1:30pm** *Cost: **FREE**
*RSVP to Laura Lebron, laura@ansrmn.org, 651-646-3005 x305.

Parenting Tips

October is National Bullying Prevention Month

Here are the top 10 signs that your child is being bullied:

1. Isolation
2. Anger
3. Refusal that something is wrong
4. Scars
5. Loss of appetite
6. Slipping grades
7. Denial
8. Change in routine
9. Spending too much time in bathrooms
10. Too much time on social media

These are just some basic things to watch for if you think your child is being bullied. As with anything else your child could display different signs.



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