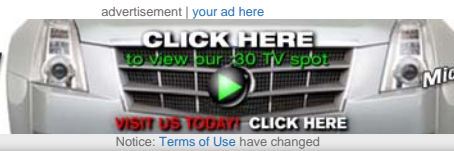


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Radon second leading cause of lung cancer deaths

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 Sunday, November 21, 2010

By Roseann Keegan
 Nevada Appeal News Service

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SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — Giant warning labels aside, most people know smoking is bad for them. But what they may not know is that smoking combined with radon exposure makes it even worse.

“Smoking combined with radon is a health risk,” said Christy Kessler, supervising health education coordinator for the El Dorado County Health Services Department. “Stop smoking and lower your radon levels to reduce lung cancer risk.”

Radon is an odorless, colorless, radioactive gas that arises from the decay of naturally occurring uranium and thorium in soil.

The gas is linked to 21,000 lung cancer deaths a year, second only to cigarette smoking, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

It is the leading cause of death among nonsmokers.

“Radon increases lung cancer among everyone,” said Lisa Sheretz, lung health program manager for the American Lung Association in Reno.

An estimated 23,400 people in the Lake Tahoe area live in homes likely to equal or exceed EPA’s recommended action level of 4 picocuries per liter. The highest concentrations are in South Lake Tahoe, Truckee and north of Emerald Bay.

While much attention is paid to eliminating tobacco, health officials say radon should not be ignored.

“Pretty amazing, isn’t it?” said Pam Graber, spokesperson for Carson City Health and Human Services. “(Radon is) the No. 1 cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers.”

While Thursday marked the 35th annual Great American Smokeout, an American Cancer Society event encouraging smokers to either quit or make a plan to quit, Graber said it’s a good time to address exposure to radon.

Free test kits are available from public agencies in California and Nevada. The kits also sell for \$5-\$20 at hardware stores.

If a problem is detected, the gas can be vented from the home’s crawl space through the roof, or the crawl space can be fortified.

Quitting smoking, however, may take even more planning. That’s where the Great American Smokeout comes in.

“What they want folks to do is use that day to decide, ‘I’m going for it,’” Graber said. “Effective quitting requires pre-contemplation and contemplation and really getting your head straight to quit.”

“Getting ready and bam, that’s day one,” she added.?

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8:40 AM on November 23, 2010
 Healthcare Town Hall » Actuarial study anticipates, supports recent findings on lung cancer screening. <http://www.healthcaretownhall.com/?p=3248>

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TravisMichael

Score: 0

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6:09 AM on November 23, 2010
 While smoking and radon do both cause lung cancer, other toxic materials are culprits in advancing the risk of developing it as well. Asbestos has been linked to lung cancer and mesothelioma, a rare form that affects the lining of the lungs. Regardless, whether it's better chemical regulations or increased safety and education, we need to take steps to beat this disease at its sources.
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<http://www.mesorc.com/>

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n2wishin

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5:29 PM on November 22, 2010
 When you test for radon do you do every room in your house? Too many unanswered questions. Oh well, google is my friend.

1 reply

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n2wishin

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2:45 PM on November 22, 2010
 "Free test kits are available from public agencies in California and Nevada. " and you could not tell us who those agencies are, WHY again?"

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AMC08

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8:44 AM on November 21, 2010
 If your home tests a high level of Radon, who do you call to make the necessary adjustments to correct it? Would it be a building contractor?

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irishprincess

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7:12 AM on November 21, 2010
 WOW! I was unaware of the radon in Tahoe. Makes ya wonder about the rest of the state. There have been significant increases of prostate cancer in Lovelock... possibly due to this. Where can you get a test kit?

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