

## Tests show one in three Incline/Crystal Bay homes may have high radon levels

Cooperative Extension offering free tests

BY [ANNIE FLANZRAICH](#)

NORTH LAKE TAHOE BONANZA,

INCLINE VILLAGE, Nev. — Recent test results show that one in three Incline Village and Crystal Bay homes could have elevated levels of the cancer-causing gas radon.

"I am not surprised of the level of radon potential due to past results ... and due to the geology of the land in the area," said Susan Howe, program director for University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's Radon Education Program, which performed tests recently in Nevada.

As of June 30, the 182 tests done in Incline Village/Crystal Bay showed elevated radon levels in 29 percent of the homes. In comparison, Douglas County showed elevated radon levels in more than 40 percent of the homes. Pershing County has the highest rate of elevated readings — 60 percent — but only 61 tests had been conducted.

More than 4,000 homes were tested in Nevada last year, and 4,550 free test kits were distributed by UNCE during National Radon Action Month last January.

Radon is an odorless, colorless, radioactive gas emanating naturally from the soil. It enters a home through foundation cracks, plumbing and utility openings, and becomes a health risk when trapped inside. It is a decay product of uranium, Howe said, found naturally in the earth and also in areas with lots of granite, which are common to the Tahoe area.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates 21,000 people in the U.S. die each year from lung cancer caused by radon exposure — more than secondhand smoke, drunken driving, falls in the home, drowning or home fires.

Howe said she is hoping more Nevadans will have their homes tested. The best time to test is when the weather is cool and windows in the house are closed. Howe also noted that Oct. 18 to 24 is Radon Action Week.

Washoe County residents can receive a free radon test thanks to the Washoe County Cooperative Extension. The tests include postage and an analysis report. Kits are available at the Incline Village Cooperative Extension office, located at 855 Alder Avenue, Suite 106. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call the Incline Village office with any questions at (775) 832-4150.