

# BASIC RADON FACTS



Nevada Radon Education Program

A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAM THROUGH THE NEVADA DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH and THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

## Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas released in rock, soil and water from the natural decay of uranium. While levels in outdoor air pose a relatively low threat to human health, radon can accumulate to dangerous levels inside any home. You can't see, smell or taste it, but an elevated radon level in your home may be affecting the health of your family.

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/l), a measurement of radioactivity. Breathing radon can increase your risk of lung cancer and is the number one cause of lung cancer among people who do not smoke. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer for people who do. **According to experts, living in a home with an average radon level of 4 pCi/ poses as much risk of developing lung cancer as smoking half a pack of cigarettes a day!**

If you smoke and your home has a high level of radon, your risk of lung cancer can increase even more. The U.S. Surgeon General, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommend fixing homes with radon levels at or above the action level of 4 pCi/l. EPA also recommends that people think about fixing their homes for radon levels between 2 and 4 pCi/l.



## Radon is found in every state.

Homes with high levels of radon have been found in every state. No area of the country is free from risk. In fact, radon levels can vary greatly from home to home. Even levels of homes next door to each other can be very different.

## You should test for radon.

The only way to know if your home is under the EPA action level of 4 pCi/l is to test. Testing for radon is easy. If your house has a radon problem, it can be fixed. Fixing a radon problem reduces the risk of lung cancer for you and your family.

A simple test will tell you if your home has an elevated radon level. The test takes three days, and it's as easy as opening a package and placing the test device in a designated area. After sending the test kit to the lab for analysis, you should receive radon results in about two weeks.

Radon test kits are available at most University of Nevada Cooperative Extension offices. Contact the Radon Hotline at 1-888-RADON10 to find the nearest office or to inquire about radon testing. Information about testing your home for radon is also available by visiting Nevada's Radon Education Program website: [www.RadonNV.com](http://www.RadonNV.com)

### How to Obtain Radon Test Kits

- Low-priced radon test kits are available at Cooperative Extension and partner offices statewide.
- Call **1-888-RADON10** to find the nearest test kit location or request a test kit by mail.
- Order a kit by mail using a coupon or credit card at <http://www.RadonNV.com>.

Nevada Radon Education Program  
4955 Energy Way  
Reno, NV 89502  
1-888-RADON10 (888-723-6610)

## Basic Radon Facts (continued)

Based on a national residential radon survey completed in 1991, the average indoor radon level is about 1.3 pCi/l in the United States. The average outdoor level is about 0.4 pCi/l. Therefore, all homes will have some amount of radon. Even if your home tests below the action level, EPA recommends homes be tested every two years, before and after remodeling, or after significant seismic activity.



### You can fix a radon problem.

The cost of making repairs to reduce the radon level depends on several factors, including how your home was built. Most homes can be fixed for about the same cost as other common home repairs, like painting or having a new hot water heater installed. The average cost in Nevada for a contractor to mitigate radon levels for a slab or basement foundation is \$2,500, and the average cost for a crawl space foundation is \$3,800. Call the Cooperative Extension office listed below or the state radon office, 1-888-RADON10 (1-888-723-6610), to locate radon mitigators in your area. All mitigated homes should be tested after 24 hours to ensure the system is working. EPA recommends testing every two years thereafter.

### New homes can be built with radon-resistant features.

Building new homes with simple and cost-effective radon-resistant features can reduce radon entry. The cost to install radon-resistant new construction features is much less than the cost of fixing an existing home.

Every new home should be tested before, or soon after you move in. Even homes built with radon-resistant construction features should be tested. If radon levels at or above the EPA's action level of 4 pCi/l are detected, it is easier and costs less to reduce radon levels in homes that are built radon-resistant.

### For more information:

- ❑ **Toll-free Radon Hotline:**  
1-888-RADON10 or 1-888-723-6610

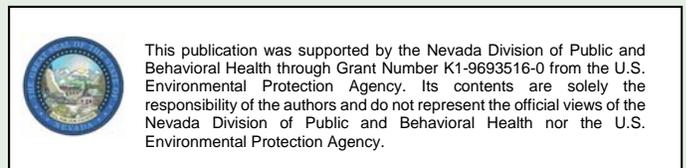
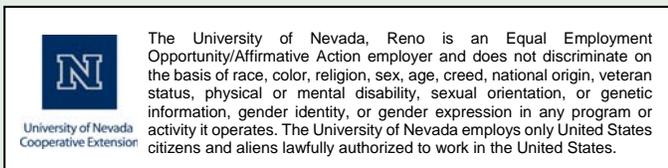
- ❑ **University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension**

4955 Energy Way, Reno, NV 89502  
Susan Howe, Program Director: 775-336-0248

**Nevada  
Radon  
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- ❑ **Nevada Radon Education Program website:** [www.RadonNV.com](http://www.RadonNV.com)



*Radon presents a serious health risk, but it can be controlled easily and cost effectively.  
Take action today. Encourage your friends and family members to do the same!*

[www.RadonNV.com](http://www.RadonNV.com) or [www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon)