

radon



Keeping your home safe



Matt Malimanek

Air Quality Specialist

N6520 Lumberjack Guy Rd.
Black River Falls, WI 54615

(715) 284-9851 ext. 35054
Toll Free: (888) 685-4422

Matthew.malimanek@ho-chunk.com

08/2021



Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas.

You can't see, smell or taste it, but it may be in your home. Radon comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water and gets into the air you breathe. Long-term exposure to radon can lead to lung cancer.

The Ho-Chunk Nation (HCN) Department of Health has created this guide to explain the health risks of radon and why it is important to get your home tested.

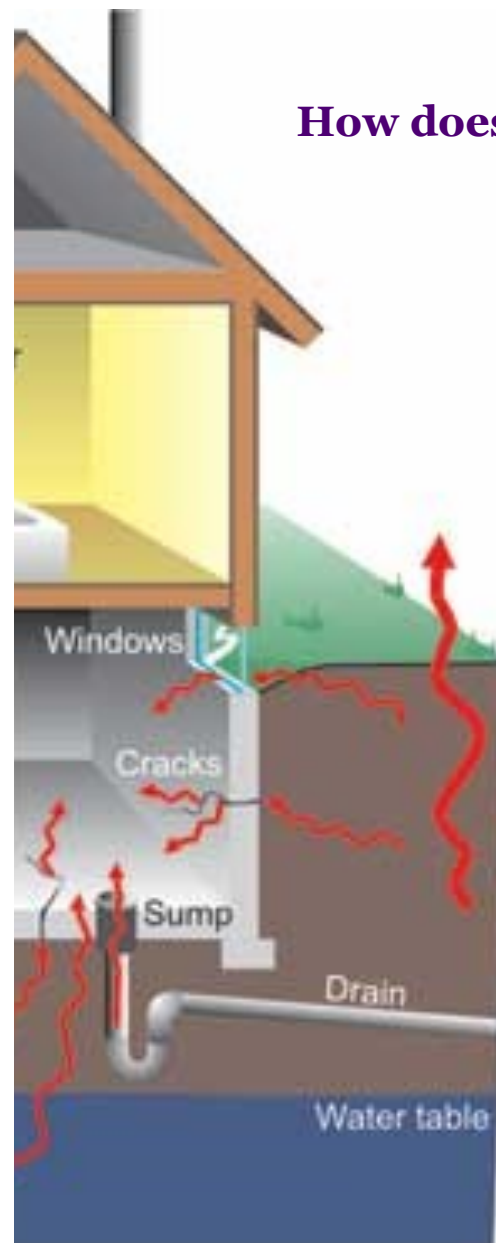
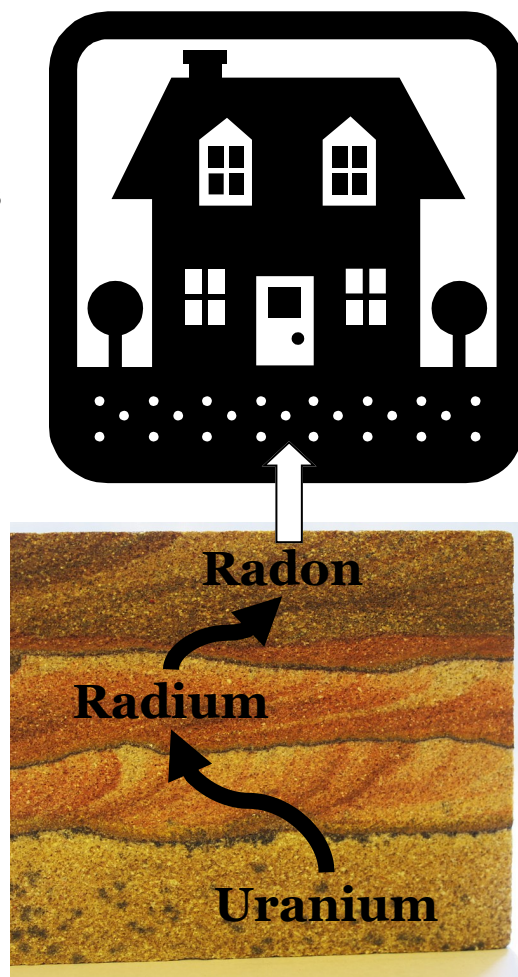
You will learn:

- How you are exposed
- How to test for it
- What to do if you have radon

Your Radon Contact:

Matt Malimanek

(715) 284-9851 ext. 35054



How does radon enter a home?

Radon comes from the soil. Soil is porous, so radon is able to move through the dirt and rocks into the air we breathe. This means that it is present everywhere. If it is allowed to be present in large amounts, radon becomes a health concern.

Two things affect how much radon with build up in a home:

Pathways– routes the gas uses to enter your home, anywhere an opening between the home and soil occurs

Air Pressure– the pressure between the inside of your home and outside soil is what helps draw radon into your home.

- Mortar joints
- Open tops of block walls
- Loose fitting pipe penetrations
- Well water (not common)

How radon enters a house



Ways of entering your home:

- Cracks in concrete slabs or blocks
- Spaces behind brick walls that rest on hollow-block foundations
- Floor-wall joints
- Exposed soil in crawl space

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL HEALTH ADVISORY "Indoor radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and breathing it over prolonged periods can present a significant health risk to families all over the country. It's important to know that this threat is completely preventable. Radon can be detected with a simple test and fixed through well-established venting techniques." January 2005

How do you test for radon?

Radon testing services are offered through the air quality specialist at the Ho-Chunk Nation.

- ♦ Call Matt Malimanek at (715) 284-9851 ext. 35054
- ♦ Set up date to have test placed
- ♦ Test will be picked up in 48-96 hours and sent to laboratory for analysis.
- ♦ Tribal member will be contacted with results, by mail, 1-3 weeks later.
- ♦ If results reveal levels higher than 4 pCi/l you will need to contact a contractor specialized in radon mitigation to start the process of radon reduction.
- ♦ Funding to install radon reduction systems is not available through the HCN Department of Health, but may be available to qualified members through other tribal and non-tribal sources.

What to do if tests revealed high levels of radon in your home?

How much does it cost?

The cost of reducing radon levels in your home depends on how and when your home was built. The cost is around the same as making other common home repairs.

How to Reduce Radon Levels

The most common types of radon reduction for homes that have slab or basement foundations are: **sub-slab suction, drain-tile suction, sump-hole suction, or block-wall suction.**

The Environmental Protection Agency does not recommend sealing the cracks or foundation openings in the house as the only method to limit radon entry. Most commonly, sub-slab depressurization systems are put into place consisting of vents and fans to reduce radon in the home. This method often does not require major changes to the home and prevent radon gas from entering the home through concrete or outside foundations. The right system for reducing radon in your home depends on the design of your home.

Living with a Radon Reduction System

Radon reduction systems will need occasional maintenance. Fans that are used in the system process will often need to be replaced every 5 years. Remember that the fans should NEVER be turned off to ensure that the system is working properly.

If you plan to remodel after a radon reduction system is in place, contact a contractor specialized in radon mitigation to ensure that this construction does not interfere with the systems in place.

Radon Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 'acceptable' level of radon?

Living environments should be below 4 pCi/l

What to do if you find high levels of radon in your home?

The first step is to conduct another test, either short term or long term.

Does radon come from building materials?

There may be a few materials such as granite, concrete, sheet rock, or bricks that emit tiny amounts of the gas, however it is rare. In most cases, high levels of radon in your home come from the outside soil.

Are there symptoms or other health problems other than lung cancer that are associated with radon gas exposure?

There has never been documentation of any short-term radon exposure symptoms. It takes years of exposure and relatively high levels before you would be likely to have any symptoms of lung cancer. You will not have bodily symptoms such as joint pain, stomach problems, headaches. Or rashes from short-term radon exposure in natural environments.