

TALKING WITH YOUR LANDLORD ABOUT RADON AND RADON MITIGATION

This document provides guidance for persons who rent their homes and who test for radon. First, we provide ways to talk, or communicate with your landlord if your home tests high for radon. Second, we provide information about radon and radon mitigation that you could share with their landlord and others.



We recommend that renters inform the landlord in writing about their radon test results and discuss having your home fixed by a certified radon mitigation professional.

HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR LANDLORD IF YOUR RADON IS AT OR ABOVE 4.0 pCi/L

I recently tested my home for radon by checking out a free radon detector from our public library (or in Christian County also the Cooperative Extension office). [We suggest you follow up all conversations in writing with your landlord].

My average 2-week Radon number in my home was [enter level with one decimal place] **pCi/L.** This level is **at or above** the Environmental Protection Agency suggested action level of 4.0 pCi/L.

You can check out a free radon detector from the public library to see if the radon levels in my home change over time [or, in Christian County, the detectors are also available for free check out at the Cooperative Extension office]. Instead of testing for only 2 weeks, you could leave the detector running for 1-3 months. After testing again, if the long-term radon number is still at or above 4 pCi/L, the U.S. Surgeon General and the EPA recommend fixing the problem. If you do more radon testing, I ask for copies of the test results.



[If there is tobacco smoke in your rental property], Since people smoke tobacco in my home [or in our rental property], radon test results may be lower than the real number because radon gas attaches to smoke particles. The combination of secondhand smoke and radon may increase the risk for lung cancer. Secondhand smoke contains 7,000 chemicals and nearly 70 are known to cause cancer. Even if people do not smoke inside, secondhand smoke can still get in the home if someone smokes near doors or windows or from an adjacent home.

Thank you for testing your rental properties for radon, and mitigating if needed. I appreciate your efforts in helping me create a healthy home for my family and me!

INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH YOUR LANDLORD

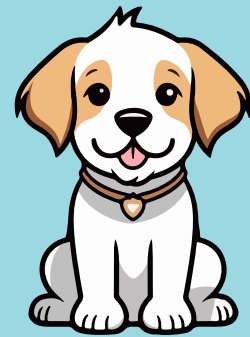
What is Radon?

Radon is a colorless, odorless radioactive gas that exists naturally in the soil and rock beneath homes and other buildings. Radon is invisible, and it has no taste or odor. It becomes a problem when it enters and becomes trapped in a home or building. Radon may be found in all types of homes and buildings.

The only way to know if you have radon in your home is to test for it. National and state health groups recommend testing all homes. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L), an indicator of radioactivity.

Radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer and the leading cause of lung cancer among never-smokers. An estimated 1,033 radon-induced lung cancers are diagnosed every year in Kentucky (about 21% of all new cases of lung cancer).

Children and pets may get a higher dose of radiation from radon exposure since they have smaller lungs, and they breathe faster than adults. Children who are exposed to radon in the home have markers in their blood showing higher levels of inflammation. Lung cancer in dogs and cats is more likely if they are exposed to radon. Most radon exposure occurs in the home.



Where Can I Get a Radon Test?

Radon testing is easy, takes very little time, and it can save lives! Public libraries in Christian, Logan, Pulaski, and Rowan counties have digital radon devices available to check out for free. The Cooperative Extension in Christian County also has the detectors for check out. These digital devices remain in the home for two weeks.

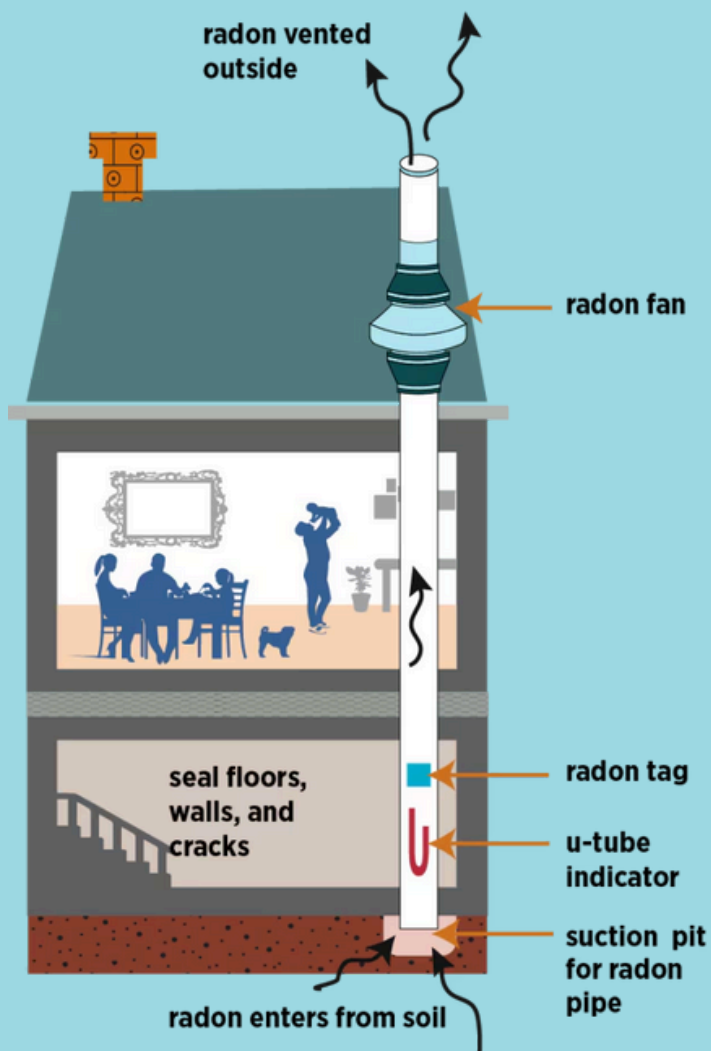


Radon test kits are also available at low cost from home improvement and hardware stores (cost \$15-\$25). The price typically includes the cost of lab analysis. These short-term tests remain in the home for 2-7 days. There are long-term radon tests that can remain in the home for up to 90 days. Radon measurement professionals can also test the home for radon at a cost.

What Can You do to Fix High Radon?

High radon can be fixed. Mitigation is the term used for fixing a radon problem in the home. A certified professional would install a pipe and fan system that reduces the radon level. Since radon mitigation involves repairs to the building, the property owner, not the tenant, is authorized to have the work done. *Rental property owners are typically responsible for keeping their properties in safe and fit condition.*

Radon mitigation components



It is Kentucky state law to use a certified radon mitigation professional to fix a radon problem.

If your landlord decides to fix the property, they will be responsible for the cost of mitigation (estimated cost from \$1,500 to \$3,000 for a single-family home and \$2,500 to \$4,000 for multifamily housing depending on the size of the building and other factors).

The right mitigation system depends on the design of the building and the foundation.

Please note that radon testing results must be disclosed by the property owner at the time of a real estate transaction.

A list of certified radon mitigators that your landlord could contact to fix your radon problem can be found here: <https://nrpp.info/pro-search/> or <https://nrsb.org/find-a-pro/>

Some federal programs may fund radon mitigation in homes of limited income families. These programs generally give money to local agencies or groups which then fund the work. In rural counties, the following contacts may assist with radon mitigation:

United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 504 Home Repair Program - contact Blaine Barnes, Single Family Housing Program Director at (859) 224-7353 or blaine.barnes@usda.gov.

For information about the 504 Home Repair Program visit:
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/single-family-housing-programs/single-family-housing-repair-loans-grants>

- In Christian County, contact Habitat for Humanity-Pennyriple. 270-825-1539
- In Rowan County, contact Frontier Housing. 606-784-2131



For additional guidance on reducing the radon level in your home and choosing a certified radon mitigation professional, review our *RADAR Radon Action Plan* <https://breathe.uky.edu/radon>, as well as the Environmental Protection Agency's *Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction*. You can view the Consumer's Guide on-line at (https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-12/documents/2016_a_citizens_guide_to_radon.pdf).

What Can You do to Fix High Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke can be easily fixed. Landlords can make their rental property smoke-free by posting no-smoking signs and not allowing smoking within 20 feet from doors, windows, and vents to prevent the smoke from entering the building.

If you have not talked with your landlord about making the rental property smoke-free, now would be a good time to consider that. Also, please ask them to move outside ashtrays away from the doorways so the smoke does not enter the building.



Renters can also adopt a smoke-free home policy by simply asking family members and visitors to smoke outside, without exceptions, at least 20 feet away from doors, windows, and vents. Remove all ashtrays from inside your home. We recommend that you take the smoke-free home pledge and post a Smoke-free Home sign. Ask smokers to cover clothing with a jacket when outside smoking and leave the jacket outside when re-entering the home.

When you make your home smoke-free, smokers in the home may be interested in quitting smoking. You can call the Quitline (1-800-QUITNOW) to get more information about how to quit smoking and/or help a family member or significant other quit.



WANT TO KNOW MORE?

American Lung Association and the National Center for Healthy Housing. Radon Risk Reduction Strategies in Rental Housing (<https://www.lung.org/getmedia/7431af99-c398-4777-aae6-888933e3e617/Radon-Risk-Reduction-Strategies-in-Rental-Housing.pdf>)

Environmental Law Institute Database of State Radon Laws.
https://www.eli.org/sites/default/files/files-pdf/2024%20Radon%20Excerpt_0.pdf

Environmental Law Institute and the US Environmental Protection Agency A Radon Guide for Tenants https://19january2021snapshot.epa.gov/sites/static/files/2014-08/documents/tenants_guide.pdf

Quick Facts about Radon and Secondhand Smoke: Radon and Secondhand Smoke | BREATHE
<https://breathe.uky.edu/radon/radon-and-secondhand-smoke>

US Department of Housing and Urban Development. HUD Exchange: Radon
<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/radon/>

Radon Potential Interactive Statewide Map: Geologically Based Indoor Radon Potential
(<https://kygs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=eac52b77783d4f2a92403740aaf8de76>)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2016). A citizen's guide to radon: A guide to protecting yourself and your family from radon. This guide is helpful as you have questions about radon's health effects, radon results and what they mean, radon testing, and radon mitigation.
(https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-12/documents/2016_a_citizens_guide_to_radon.pdf)

This publication was supported by NIEHS through Grant R01 ES030380 and in part through Grant P30 ES026529. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the NIEHS.