



Jeb Bush  
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A.  
Secretary

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Contact: Lindsay Hodges  
850-245-4111

**STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES UNITE IN URGING  
HOME TESTING FOR ELEVATED RADON**  
*-- January is National Radon Awareness Month --*

**Tallahassee** – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) joins the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in educating all Floridians about the dangers of exposures to elevated levels of indoor radon. These agencies encourage everyone to identify and fix radon problems in their homes and that new homes be built with radon-resistant features.

“Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, but Floridians can take steps to prevent exposure,” said DOH Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A. “Floridians should know they can take important steps to protect themselves and their families from long-term exposure to radon.”

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, radioactive gas that is produced in soils. Outdoor levels are quite low and produce little risk, but when radon is trapped inside of buildings, the higher concentrations create a potential health hazard. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. According to the National Academy of Sciences, radon causes between 15,000 and 22,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. An estimated 750 Florida residents died last year from long-term exposure to radon.

Testing homes for radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits are available at several retail outlets and through DOH-certified radon businesses. Also, homeowners may consider hiring a DOH-certified radon measurement business to test their home. If elevated levels are discovered, they can be easily addressed. A certified radon contractor can fix radon problems for a cost similar to that for many common home repairs.

Florida’s new building code includes radon construction techniques in the appendices. These radon-resistant features can be installed at a much lower cost than fixing a radon problem after a home is built. These radon-resistant techniques can be used anywhere in the state to reduce exposure to indoor radon but are especially important in those areas reporting more elevated radon. You can reduce radon in your new home by asking your builder to include these features.

For more information on radon, its health effects and how to test for and decrease elevated levels of radon, call the Florida Department of Health’s Radon Hotline, toll free, at 1-800-543-8279. Additional information is available at the department’s radon website at [www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/facility/radon/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/facility/radon/index.html).

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