



Arkansas Department of Health

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Radon in Homes Program

RADON GAS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Q: How do I test my home for radon?

Answer: You can test your own home simply and inexpensively with a test kit from a local hardware store.

There are two non-federal (privately run), national radon certification programs [National Radon Proficiency Program (NRPP) and National Radon Safety Board (NRSB)] that certify individuals/companies in radon measurement, radon mitigation (removal), and the analysis of radon in laboratories, provided certain requirements are met. The Arkansas Department of Health does not certify, license, or register radon professionals or laboratories.

Q: What does my result mean?

Answer: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that homes sampled with a radon gas around 2-4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) should consider mitigation or long-term testing. Homes with radon levels at 4 pCi/L or higher should be mitigated [removed or reduced].

Q: If I decide to mitigate [remove or reduce radon] my home, whom should I get to perform the work? Do I need to retest after the work is completed?

Answer: The EPA recommends that you use a certified or qualified radon mitigation contractor trained to fix radon problems. Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) and EPA acknowledge two National Radon Proficiency Programs, NRPP and NRSB. As with any other home repairs, you should get estimates and references. Once the work is completed, radon testing must be conducted again for confirmation that radon gas levels are reduced or gone.

Q: I am a general contractor and would like information on training courses available for the measurement and mitigation [removal] of radon. Where can I find information about this?

Answer: Information regarding on-line and in-person training courses is provided by our EPA Regional Training Center Partner, Kansas State University. Training information may also be found on the websites of the two national certification programs that certify professionals (NRPP & NRSB) to perform measurement and/or reduction of radon.

Q: If you are selling a home, should you test for radon?

Answer: EPA recommends that you test your home before putting it on the market and if necessary, lower your radon levels. Save the test results and all information you have about steps that were taken to fix any problems. This could be a positive selling point.

Q: If you are buying a house, should you ask about radon?

Answer: EPA recommends that you know what the indoor radon level is for any home you consider buying. Ask the seller for their radon test results. If the home has a radon-reduction system, ask the seller for any information they have about the system. If the home has not been tested, you should have the home tested. If you are having a new home built, there are features that can be incorporated into your home during construction to reduce radon levels.

Q: What conditions do I need to specify regarding radon testing prior to a home purchase?

Answer: ADH recommends the following considerations regarding indoor radon gas testing:

- who will perform the test;
- type of test (short-term, long-term, and/or continuous monitor);
- test location (lowest livable level);
- when the test will be done;
- how results will be shared between parties;
- who will pay for the testing;
- how the results will be used;
- at what radon level will mitigation (removal) be required and who will pay for it.

Q: What are some key questions to ask a radon mitigation [removal]contractor?

Answer: When discussing your needs with a contractor, see the following important questions to ask.

- Will the contractor perform diagnostics to determine the suction point location and correct pipe and fan sizes?
- Who is responsible for obtaining permits, if required?
- Will a contract be provided?
- Who will do the licensed electrical work?
- Is there a warranty on materials or the workmanship? If so, for how long? Does the warranty include system performance?
- How will the system be evaluated?
- What nationally recognized standard is being followed in performing the mitigation work?
- Will the contractor offer the homeowner training in the radon mitigation system operations and/or troubleshooting?
- Will the contractor guarantee that radon levels will be brought below the EPA recommended action level of 4.0 pCi/L?
- What will the contractor do if post-removal radon levels are not below the recommended action level?
- Can the contractor provide a list of references?

- Is the quoted price guaranteed?

Q: What does the radon mitigation [removal] process entail?

Answer: There are ten general steps in the radon reduction process.

1. Homeowner's radon test reveals the home has a radon problem.
2. Homeowner contacts nationally certified mitigators to request bids.
3. Contractor does a walk-through of the home to identify problems then outlines the mitigation system they recommend.
4. Homeowner reviews key questions with each contractor, requesting a proposal, bid, and references.
5. Homeowner evaluates and compares contractor recommendations, bids, and contracts, selecting the contractor and scheduling the work.
6. Contractor may perform diagnostic testing to ensure proper size and installation methods are applied.
7. Contractor seals required areas, e.g., large cracks, crawl spaces, sumps, etc.
8. Contractor installs the mitigation system, i.e., suction pit or ventilation, pipe routing, etc.
9. Contractor provides full explanation of system's operation to homeowner.
10. Homeowner or contractor tests the home to ensure system is reducing radon to the desired level.