



# Madison County Health Department announces availability of Radon test kits

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WOOD RIVER – [Madison County Health Department](#) (MCHD) is emphasizing the importance of having your home tested for radon. While supplies last, MCHD is offering radon test kits for \$6 each for residents to check the radon level in their home. Radon is a significant environmental cancer risk. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers and the second leading cause of lung cancer among smokers. Over 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. are caused by radon exposure.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, and invisible gas that occurs naturally in the soil. It is produced by the natural breakdown of uranium and radium in rock formations. Radon typically enters a home by moving up from the soil and through cracks and holes in the foundation. Things such as sump pits, foundation cracks, gaps in suspended floors, construction joints and exposed soil in crawl spaces are areas where Radon may find a route into a home. Although a much smaller risk, radon can also enter a home through water that is obtained from the ground, such as from water wells. Once inside a home, radon gas can build up and create a hazard.

The only way for homeowners to know if radon is present is to test for it. Testing is easy, inexpensive, and convenient taking only 3 days. Tests should be done on the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied. Tests should not be done in kitchens, bathrooms, laundry rooms, or utility rooms. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L), a measurement of radioactivity. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the average indoor radon level in the U.S. is about 1.3 pCi/L. Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) reports that the average indoor radon level in Illinois is about 4.9 pCi/L. The U.S. Surgeon General and EPA recommend fixing homes with radon levels at or above 4pCi/L. Radon is a preventable health threat through testing and mitigation. Radon problems can be fixed and usually cost is similar to common home repairs.

“With the presence of radon in this geographic area, we encourage residents to take advantage of this opportunity and test for radon in their homes,” stated Erin Boester, Madison County Health Department Health Protection Manager. MCHD is offering radon test kits for \$6 each which includes all testing fees and pre-paid postage to mail the kit for your results to Madison County residents. Residents can come to MCHD to purchase a Radon test kit during regular business hours (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) at 101 E. Edwardsville Road, Wood River, IL 62095. When you pick up a test kit at MCHD, a staff member will assist you with the instructions on using the test kit, as well as, give you valuable information regarding radon, radon measurement, and radon mitigation. Additionally, should your radon test results show a high level of radon in your home, MCHD can provide you with a list of licensed radon measurement professionals and licensed radon mitigation professionals for follow-up.

For more information about the MCHD Radon test kits, call (618) 296-6079.

For more information about National Radon Action Month, visit <https://www.epa.gov/radon>.

For more information about radon, visit our website at <http://www.co.madison.il.us/departments/health/radon.php> or IEMA at [www.radon.illinois.gov](http://www.radon.illinois.gov).