

NEWS RELEASE

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The Risks of Indoor Radon

The U.S. Surgeon General, Richard H. Carmona, recently issued a national health advisory warning to the American public about the risks of breathing indoor radon. The advisory is meant to urge Americans to prevent this silent radioactive gas from seeping into their homes and building up to dangerous levels.

“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” Dr. Carmona said. “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”. Radon is an invisible, odorless and tasteless gas, with no immediate health symptoms, that comes from the breakdown of uranium inside the earth. Simple test kits can reveal the amount of radon in any building. Those with high levels can be fixed with simple and affordable venting techniques. According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates, one in every 15 homes nationwide has a high radon level at or above the recommended radon action level of 4 picoCuries (pCi/L) per liter of air.

Radon gas in the indoor air of America’s homes poses a serious health risk. More than 20,000 Americans die of radon-related lung cancer every year. Millions of homes have an elevated radon level. If you also smoke, your risk of lung cancer is much higher. Test your home for radon every two years, and retest any time you move, make structural changes to your home, or occupy a

previously unused level of a house. If you have a radon level of 4 pCi/L or more, take steps to remedy the problem as soon as possible.

For more information about radon or to find out the nearest location to pick up a free radon test kit, visit RAPCA's Radon page at <http://www.rapca.org/radon/radon.htm>.

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