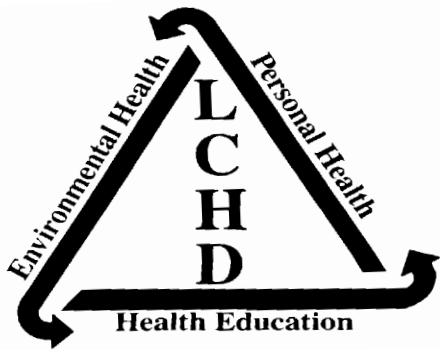


MEDIA RELEASE



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To: All Media

From: LaSalle County Health Department
717 Etna Road
Ottawa, IL 61350

Contact: Jenny Barrie (ext. 74315)
Leslie Dougherty (ext. 74314)

Phone: (815) 433-3366
For Immediate Release

"January is National Radon Action Month"

Ottawa, IL – The LaSalle County Health Department is encouraging residents to test the radon level in their home. Radon is a radioactive gas that occurs naturally in most soil. As radon travels through the soil, it can easily move through small spaces in a foundation and enter a building, where it becomes trapped and accumulates in the air.

Radon has no taste, smell, or color. Testing is the only way to find out if there is a dangerous level of radon in your home. The best time to test for radon is during cold weather when windows and doors are closed.

Most radon exposures occur in the home. When people breathe in radon, it damages the lungs, which can cause lung cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking. Radon can be found throughout Illinois and levels can vary from one home to another, even in the same neighborhood. It's estimated more than 1,160 people in Illinois develop radon-related lung cancer each year according to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established the radon action level at 4 picocuries per liter of air (4 pCi/L). At or above this level, it is recommended that corrective measures be taken to reduce indoor radon levels. Radon mitigation is the only effective way to reduce levels and decrease the risk of lung cancer. The most common radon reduction system involves the installation of a vent pipe and fan, which draws air from underneath a building and displaces it outside. The cost of a system varies depending on the reduction method chosen and building size. Radon is a preventable health threat through testing and mitigation.

According to a study conducted by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), 45 percent of homes tested for radon in Illinois had levels at or above the EPA action level of 4.0 picoCuries per liter (pCi/L). In addition, per the IEMA Public Radon Dashboard, the average radon measurement in LaSalle County is 7/pCi/L. Jennie Arroyo, Director of Environmental Health, said "any home, old or new, can have a radon problem. Even if your neighbors have low radon levels, yours could still be high. Because we can't see, smell, or taste radon, many people are unaware that their homes have

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high levels. Test to be sure.” The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) recommends you test your home for radon every two years.

In 2025, LaSalle County Health Department gave out two-hundred-seven (207) test kits. One-hundred-thirty-eight (138) of those test kits have been submitted for analysis, for a 67.0% usage rate. One-hundred-eleven (111) have produced valid results, with fifty-nine (59) having a result above 4.0 pCi/L. The average result of the kits analyzed in 2025 is 5.58 pCi/L.

LaSalle County Health Department, through a grant from the IEMA, has free radon test kits available to residents of LaSalle County. Test kits can be picked up at the health department during regular business hours (Mon.-Fri., 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at 717 E. Etna Road in Ottawa. A staff member will assist you with the instructions on using the test kit, as well as provide information regarding radon, radon measurement, and radon mitigation. Additionally, should your radon test results show a high level of radon in your home, the health department can provide you with a list of licensed radon measurement professionals and licensed radon mitigation professionals for follow-up. Call the LaSalle County Health Department at (815) 433-3366, for more information on radon test kits.

Additional Resources:

Visit <https://www.radon.com/instructions/> to view a testing kit instructional video.

IEMA Public Radon Dashboard

<https://ilema.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/93e4f4824a4046b48d1f35b7226069a8>

Illinois Radon Hotline at 1-800-325-1245 (hours are weekdays from 7 am through 6 pm and weekends from 9 am through 5 pm)

For additional information, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/radon>.

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