

Radon Myths and Facts

MYTH: Scientists are not sure that radon really is a problem.

FACT: Although some scientists dispute the precise number of deaths due to radon, all the major health organizations (like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Lung Association and the American Medical Association) agree with estimates that radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year. This is especially true among smokers, since the risk to smokers is much greater than to non-smokers.

MYTH: Radon testing is difficult, time-consuming and expensive.

FACT: Radon testing is easy and inexpensive.

MYTH: Radon testing devices are not reliable and are difficult to find.

FACT: Reliable testing devices are available from qualified radon testers and companies.

MYTH: Homes with radon problems can't be fixed.

FACT: There are simple solutions to radon problems in homes. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners have already fixed radon problems in their homes. Radon levels can be readily lowered for \$800 to \$2,500 (with an average cost of \$1,200)..

MYTH: Radon affects only certain kinds of homes.

FACT: House construction can affect radon levels. However, radon can be a problem in homes of all types: old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements and homes without basements. Local geology, construction materials, and how the home was built are among the factors that can affect radon levels in homes.

MYTH: Radon is only a problem in certain parts of the country.

FACT: High radon levels have been found in every state. Radon problems do vary from area to area, but the only way to know your radon level is to test.

MYTH: A neighbor's test result is a good indication of whether your home has a problem.

FACT: It's not. Radon levels can vary greatly from home to home. The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test for it.

MYTH: It's difficult to sell a home where radon problems have been discovered.

FACT: Where radon problems have been fixed, home sales have not been blocked or frustrated. The added protection is sometimes a good selling point.

MYTH: I've lived in my home for so long, it doesn't make sense to take action now.

FACT: You will reduce your risk of lung cancer when you reduce radon levels, even if you've

lived with a radon problem for a long time.

MYTH: Short-term tests can't be used for making a decision about whether to fix your home.

FACT: *A short-term test, followed shortly by a second short-term test can be used to decide whether to fix your home. However, the closer the average of your two short-term tests is to 4 pCi/L, the less certain you can be about whether your year-round average is above or below that level. Keep in mind that radon levels below 4 pCi/L still pose some risk. Radon levels can be reduced in most homes to 2 pCi/L or below.*