

## **EPA encourages Rocky Mountain and Great Plains region residents to “Test Your Nest” and reduce home radon levels**

**Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming among highest-risk states for lung cancer from radon gas**

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**DENVER (January 25, 2023)** - January is National Radon Action Month and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is working with our partners to spread the word about radon health risks in homes, the importance of testing, and steps homeowners can take to reduce risk in the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Radon is a known carcinogen and is estimated to cause more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S. In fact, the colorless, odorless gas is the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers. The good news is the health risks and impacts are preventable-- testing and reducing radon levels in your home, and saving lives, is easy.

This year's Call to Action - **“Test Your Nest!”** - is especially important to our region's residents as large portions of these states are at-risk for high indoor radon levels that can cause lung cancer. The best way to protect against radon is to perform a simple, low-cost test of your home. EPA recommends homeowners take action to reduce radon levels when they exceed the action level of 4.0 picocuries per liter (or 4pCi/L).

### [Map of Radon Zones in the United States](#)

“Understanding your home's radon levels is one of the most important steps you can take to protect you and your family's health,” **said EPA Regional Administrator KC Becker**. “I encourage you to take some time to check your nest this winter, so you can be sure that quality time spent inside with friends and loved ones is not just comfortable, but safe.”

Want to learn more? The information and resources below can help!

### **Things You Can Do**

- **Learn the basics** - Visit EPA's [Radon website](#) for a wide range of information, including [free radon publications](#).
- **Test your home** - EPA and the U.S. Surgeon General recommend that all homes in the U.S. be tested for radon. Learn more about [testing your home](#), including how to obtain an easy-to-use test kit.
- **Fix your home if needed** - Should your test results come back elevated, EPA recommends hiring a certified radon mitigation specialist to install a mitigation system that will prevent radon from entering your home. Read about ways to reduce radon in your home in EPA's [“Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction.”](#)
- **Spread the word** - Check out [Media Resources here](#) and share infographics on social media and around your community to help get the word out about the importance of radon testing. Tell your family and friends about the [health risk of radon](#).
- **Building a new home? Make it radon-resistant.** Read more about radon-resistant new construction, [“Building Radon Out: A Step-by-Step Guide to Build Radon-Resistant Homes.”](#)

## **STATE-by-STATE INFO for EPA Region 8**

### **COLORADO Radon Fast Facts**

- Half of all homes in Colorado have high radon levels.
- Living in a home with Colorado's average level of radon (6.4pCi/L) is **like having 200 chest x-rays each year**.
- Approximately 500 people in Colorado die every year from lung cancer caused by radon exposure.
- Colorado has a low-income radon mitigation assistance (LIRMA) program that can pay for radon mitigation if eligibility requirements are met: [www.coloradoradon.info](http://www.coloradoradon.info).

### **COLORADO Radon Experts**

- Chrystine Kelley: Radon Program Manager, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, (303) 692-3442, [chrys.kelley@state.co.us](mailto:chrys.kelley@state.co.us)

- Patty Dooley-Strappelli: Boulder County Public Health, [www.radonawarecolorado.org](http://www.radonawarecolorado.org), (303) 441-1560, [pdooley-strappelli@bouldercounty.org](mailto:pdooley-strappelli@bouldercounty.org)
- Heidi Nafman Onda: Radon-induced lung cancer survivor, radon awareness advocate, (303) 594-4787, [nafonda@comcast.net](mailto:nafonda@comcast.net)
- Sally A. Madden: Radon-induced lung cancer survivor, radon awareness advocate, (303) 807-6438, [smadden@wlgore.com](mailto:smadden@wlgore.com)

### **MONTANA Radon Fast Facts**

- Nearly half of all homes in Montana have high radon levels.

### **MONTANA Radon Experts**

- Michael L. Gustafson: Montana Small Business Ombudsman, Radon Coordinator, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, (406) 444-6592, [Michael.Gustafson@mt.gov](mailto:Michael.Gustafson@mt.gov)
- Paul Tschida: Energy Resource Professional, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, (406) 444-6464, [ptschida@mt.gov](mailto:ptschida@mt.gov)

### **NORTH DAKOTA Radon Fast Facts**

- EPA lists all North Dakota counties as Zone 1, the highest potential for elevated radon levels.
- 63 percent of homes in North Dakota have an elevated radon above the EPA Action Level of 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L).

### **NORTH DAKOTA Radon Experts**

- Justin Otto: Radon Program Manager, North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality, (701) 328-5246, [jotto@nd.gov](mailto:jotto@nd.gov)
- Gary G Schwartz: Professor, University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences, (701) 777-6598, [gary.schwartz@und.edu](mailto:gary.schwartz@und.edu)

### **SOUTH DAKOTA Fast Facts**

- Living in a home with South Dakota's average level of radon (9.6 pCi/L) is like having **300 chest x-rays each year**.

### **SOUTH DAKOTA Radon Experts**

- Duncan Jakubowski: Radon Coordinator, South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, [Duncan.Jakubowski@state.sd.us](mailto:Duncan.Jakubowski@state.sd.us)

### **UTAH Radon Fast Facts**

- 1 in 3 tested Utah homes have elevated radon levels.
- Utah has the lowest rate of smoking in the nation, but lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the state.

### **UTAH Radon Experts**

- Kerri Robbins: Radon-induced lung cancer survivor, radon awareness advocate, [kerrielaine19@gmail.com](mailto:kerrielaine19@gmail.com)
- Eleanor Divver: Utah Radon Coordinator, (801) 558-4053, [edivver@utah.gov](mailto:edivver@utah.gov)
- Dr. Wallace Akerley: Radon expert, [wallace.akerley@hci.utah.edu](mailto:wallace.akerley@hci.utah.edu)
- Michael Siler: President of Utah Radon Coalition, [msiler@utahradoncoalition.org](mailto:msiler@utahradoncoalition.org)

### **WYOMING Radon Fast Facts**

- The average level of radon in Wyoming is 5.1 pCi/L, which is higher than the EPA action level of 4 pCi/L.
- Of the 99 municipalities in Wyoming, 18 have adopted Radon Control Measures in their building code.
- On average, 1,397 Wyoming homes are tested each year for radon and 118 homes are mitigated each year.
- Radon test kits are available free of charge while supplies last to Wyoming residents at [health.wyo.gov/radon](http://health.wyo.gov/radon).

### **WYOMING Radon Experts**

- Randi Norton-Herrington: Outreach and Media Coordinator, Wyoming Cancer Program, Department of Health; (307) 777-6015; [randi.norton@wyo.gov](mailto:randi.norton@wyo.gov)

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Additional assets available online: [Photos \(1\)](#)

<https://epa.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=20295&item=123306>