



**PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA**

Central Michigan District Health Department  
*"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"*

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**To: Local Media**

**From: Central Michigan District Health Department's Environmental Health Department**

**RE: Radon Awareness Month**

**Release Date: January 2017**

**TEST KITS OFFERED FOR  
RADON AWARENESS MONTH**

January is Radon Awareness month and the Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) invites you and your family to join others in taking the "test" for radon in your home. Radon tests are easy to do and are available at any local health department. **During the month of January, test kits at all branch offices of CMDHD will be discounted to \$5 or free with a donation of a nonperishable food item.** Donated food items will be given to local food pantries that have supplies depleted during the holiday season. "The staff at CMDHD are pleased to be able to offer radon testing at a reduced cost while helping local food pantries," says Director of Environmental Health Services, Steve King.

Radon is a Class A carcinogen (cancer-causing) radioactive gas. You cannot see, smell, or taste radon, but it may be a problem in your home. When you breathe air which contains radon, you increase your risk of getting lung cancer. In fact, the Surgeon General says that radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in America. About 21,000 Americans will die each year of radon-related lung cancer. If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is especially high. Some scientific studies of radon exposure indicate that children may be more sensitive to radon. This may be due to their higher respiration rate and their rapidly dividing cells, which may be more vulnerable to radiation damage.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas resulting from the natural decay of uranium. Most soils contain varying amounts of uranium. Radon in soil, groundwater, or building materials enters working and living spaces and begins to disintegrate into its radioactive decay products. The decay products then attach to the surface of aerosols, dusts, and smoke particles. These particles are inhaled and may become trapped deeply in the lungs. "Radon can become concentrated in our

homes, especially in the winter months when doors and windows are closed, so this is the best time to test,” stated Director King.

Indoor radon is a national environmental health problem. It has been determined to be the most serious cancer-causing agent that the general public encounters in the environment. Elevated radon levels have been found in virtually every state. The EPA estimates that as many as 8 million homes throughout the country have elevated levels of radon. State surveys to date show that 1 out of 15 homes have elevated radon levels.

Exposure to radon **does not** cause headaches, nausea, fatigue, or skin rashes like many other environmental toxins. There are no immediate symptoms that will alert you to the presence of radon. It typically takes years of exposure before any problems surface and then it is too late. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Surgeon General, American Lung Association, American Medical Association and National Safety Council all recommend testing your home for radon. Testing is the only way to know your homes radon levels.

More general Radon information is available by calling the Central Michigan District Health Department or visiting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Website at <http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html> or <http://www.michigan.gov/deq/>

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at [www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org), LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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