

January is National Radon Action Month

Brown County Public Health has a limited number of short term radon test kits at no charge on a first-come, first-serve basis to homeowners in the Brown County area beginning Wednesday January 6, 2021 during "Radon Action Month."

To obtain a kit please call our office at 507-233-6820 to set up a time to pick up the kit.

A limited number of kits will be available by appointment only at:

Brown County Public Health Office, located 1117 Center Street, New Ulm Minnesota

Sleepy Eye City Office at 200 Main Street E Sleepy Eye, MN

Springfield City Office at 2 E Central Street Springfield, MN

About 2 in 5 homes have dangerous levels of radon; every home should be tested

Radon is an odorless, colorless and tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally in Minnesota soils. It can enter buildings through cracks or openings in walls or foundations. Testing is the only way for residents to know if a home has elevated radon.

Radon is the leading environmental cause of cancer deaths in the United States and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. More than 21,000 lung cancer deaths are attributed to radon each year in the U.S.

Fortunately, the risk is largely preventable, by testing homes and fixing radon problems.

To help residents get a more accurate picture of radon, the Minnesota Department of Health launched a radon data portal. The portal includes interactive maps that describe radon levels and disparities in testing and mitigation rates. The portal can be found on the MDH web site: <https://data.web.health.state.mn.us/web/mndata/radon>.

Brown County is considered a county with a high concentration of radon in the soil. Over 75% of the homes tested have a radon level of ≥ 4 pCi/L which is considered a risk.

Testing takes 2-7 days. The best time to test is during the heating season, but testing can be done year-round. Tests should be done in the lowest level of the home that is frequently occupied. Test kits are available in Brown County at the Public Health Department, many hardware stores, or directly from radon testing laboratories

A list of currently licensed radon measurement professionals can be found on the MDH site: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/radon/findprof.html>

In homes found to have high radon levels, radon reduction typically involves installing a venting pipe and fan to pull the gas from under the home to the outside. This reduces the

amount of radon in the home to low levels. Professionals conducting radon mitigation must be licensed by MDH, follow standards, and affix a MDH tag to the system. A list of currently licensed radon mitigation professionals can be found on the MDH site:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/radon/mitigation.html>

Test kits are available at the Public Health office year around at a reduced rate of \$10.00 for a short term kit and \$13.00 for a long term kit, even after the limited number of free kits is gone.

For more information on radon visit www.health.state.mn.us/radon or call Brown County Public Health at 507-233-6820 or the Minnesota Department of Health Indoor Air Unit at 651-201-4601.

To see how radon has affected the lives of cancer patients and their families visit www.CanSar.org.