

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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January is Radon Action Month

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) urges area residents to take preventive action against lung cancer by testing their homes for radon. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers. It is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that enters homes and buildings through the breakdown of uranium in the soil.

“Every building has radon. The only way to know the level of radon in your home is to test for it,” states Joy Trail, Program Manager at SWNPHD. “In Nebraska, at least half of homes tested have a high radon level.”

Increased risks for radon exposure:

- Dirt crawl spaces
- Cracks or fissures in concrete foundations
- Open spaces around sump pumps or other pipes
- Bedrooms or other frequently used living spaces in the basement

In 2019 the Nebraska legislature passed a law requiring all new construction to be radon resistant, which will help reduce radon exposure going forward. For homes that test high for radon, a licensed radon professional can help. Radon mitigation uses several methods to reduce the amount of radon in a home, including installing ventilation pipes if needed. A list of licensed radon professionals is available from SWNPHD.

“Winter is a good time to test your home for radon,” continues Trail. “Most folks keep their homes snug and tight this time of year, and less fresh air is when radon is more likely to build up indoors.” Radon test kits are available at most home improvement stores or online at radon.com. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends homes be tested for radon every 2 years.

For more information on radon testing and mitigation call Joy Trail at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundey, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. The website swhealth.ne.gov contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health. Follow SWNPHD on Facebook and Instagram.

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