

## What is Radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas. It cannot be seen, felt, smelled or tasted. Radon gas can be found naturally in decaying radioactive soil and rocks. The gas moves up the soil to the surface where it can enter homes through crawlspaces, foundation cracks, floors and walls. Once in a home, it can be trapped inside.

## Health Effects of Radon Exposure

There are no immediate symptoms for radon poisoning. Rather, health problems from radon exposure, like lung cancer, will show up many years later. **Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.** If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk for lung cancer is very high.

## Can I get Tested for Radon Poisoning?

There are no medical tests to examine radon levels in the body. There are also no treatments to remove radon from the body. If you think you may have been exposed to high levels of radon, talk to your doctor.

**The best way to protect you and your family from radon is by testing your air and water.**



## Available Online Resources:

- American Cancer Society- Radon and Cancer:  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/radiation-exposure/radon.html>
- HUD- About Radon:  
[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/healthyhomes/radon](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/healthy_homes/healthyhomes/radon)
- U.S. EPA- Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction: How to Fix Your Home:  
[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/2013\\_consumers\\_guide\\_to\\_radon\\_reduction.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-02/documents/2013_consumers_guide_to_radon_reduction.pdf)
- U.S. EPA- Radon:  
<https://www.epa.gov/radon>

## Maine's Health and Environmental Testing Lab Air and Water Test Kits:

Maine Radon Air Kit:

[https://www1.maine.gov/cgi-bin/WebShop/public/product?store\\_id=10&product\\_id=406](https://www1.maine.gov/cgi-bin/WebShop/public/product?store_id=10&product_id=406)

Maine Radon Water Kit:

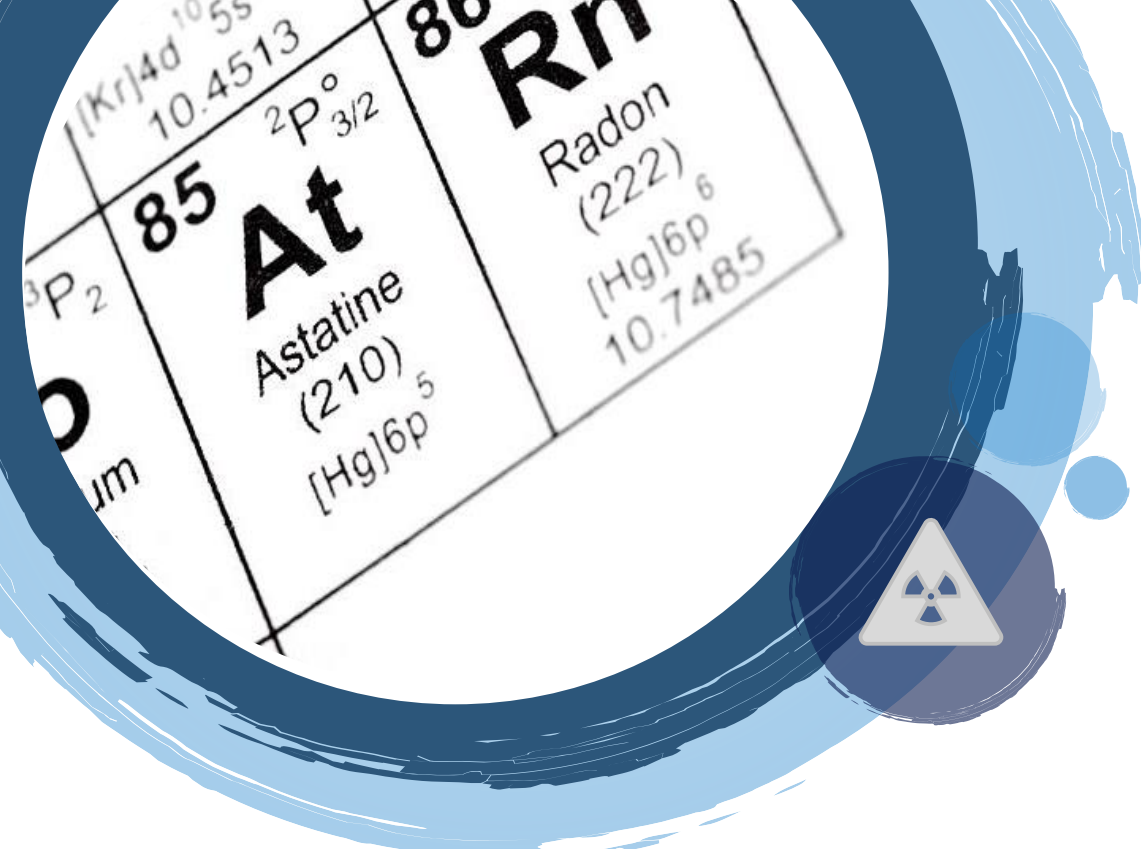
[https://www1.maine.gov/cgi-bin/WebShop/public/product?store\\_id=10&product\\_id=405](https://www1.maine.gov/cgi-bin/WebShop/public/product?store_id=10&product_id=405)

Penobscot Nation Health Department  
(207) 817-7430  
Open Monday-Friday  
8:00 am-4:30 pm

# Radon Guide *for* Homeowners



- Health Effects of Radon Exposure
- How to Test for Radon
- How to Mitigate Radon in Your Home



## Testing Your Home for Radon

A new or old house can have a radon problem. The only way to know if your house has a radon problem is by testing.

All homeowners are recommended to air test for radon every 2 years. Homeowners with a well should also do a radon water test. Homeowners that use municipal water do not need to test their water for radon.

## How to Test Your Home's Air and Water for Radon

Homeowners can purchase a short term air and water test kit online through Maine's Health and Environmental Testing Lab or at a local hardware store. A professional can also be hired to test radon for you.

## When to Take Action to Reduce the Radon Level in Your Home

Depending on your radon test results, you may want to take steps to reduce radon in your home. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter (pCi/l). The Maine State advisory levels highly recommend homeowners reduce radon levels if your home's indoor air is 4 pCi/l. Indoor air between 2 and 4 pCi/l should also be considered for reduction.

Home water supply levels of 4,000 pCi/l or higher require action, beginning with reviewing your total radon risk (combined risk from radon in air and water). As your radon in water level gets closer to 10,000 pCi/l, installing treatment is recommended.

## How to Mitigate Radon in Your Home

The right system depends on the design of your home. Contact a registered Mitigation Contractor that has received state approved training. It is also recommended homeowners consult the "EPA Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction: How to Fix Your Home" before beginning a mitigation project. Re-test your home after repairs to make sure the problem was fixed.

## Additional Tips to Follow

- Do not smoke in your house. Smoking increases the risk of lung cancer from radon.
- Keep your home ventilated by opening windows and using fans and vents to circulate air. (This will only temporarily reduce radon levels.)
- Seal cracks in floors and wall with plaster, caulk or other crack sealants.

