

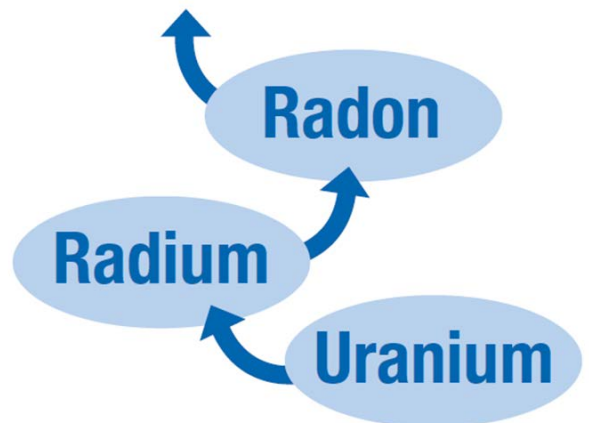
# Radon in schools

## Fact Sheet on Radon Exposure for Students and Staff



### What is radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas you can't see, smell or taste. It is a decay product of uranium and is found all over the world. Uranium and its decay products are naturally found in the soil and rocks beneath buildings. Our school image (right) shows how uranium naturally decays into radium that further breaks down into radon gas. Radon moves up through the soil and enters buildings in contact.



### Why is radon a problem in Oregon schools?

Radon is the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer, after smoking. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates around 21,000 radon-related lung cancer deaths occur each year. Breathing high levels of radon in combination with smoking is even more dangerous and increases your risk by ten times.

Home is likely the most significant source for breathing radon. According to the EPA, 1 out of 15 homes has high radon levels. School is likely the second largest source of radon exposure for students and staff. The only way to know your radon levels is to test. The EPA recommends that **all** homes and schools be tested for radon.

EPA ACTION LEVEL

**4.0**  $\frac{\text{Picocuries}}{\text{Liter of air}}$

### Testing at Home

Radon testing at home can be simple and inexpensive. You can find do-it-yourself test kits at most local hardware stores and online from the [American Lung Association](http://www.AmericanLungAssociation.org). Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Radon Program also offers FREE test kits to those living in areas where little data is available. To find out if you are eligible, contact [radon.program@state.or.us](mailto:radon.program@state.or.us).

### Testing in Oregon Schools

By law (ORS 332.166-167), all Oregon schools are required to test for radon before January 1, 2021.

School radon testing involves the placement of small testing devices in all frequently occupied rooms on the lowest level of the building. Initial testing is short-term and lasts between 2 and 7 days. Test devices are not dangerous in any way.

Rooms that test at or above 4.0 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L) (EPA recommended action level) are subject to longer confirmation testing and radon reduction systems.

\*Test results for your school can be found at:

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For more information about radon, visit [www.healthoregon.org/radon](http://www.healthoregon.org/radon).

If you have other questions or concerns about radon testing at your school, contact **Reynolds School District Facilities Maintenance Department** at (503) 661-7200 ext. 3301.



# Radon Resources

## Local and National Resources:

### Oregon Radon Awareness Program

[www.healthoregon.org/radon](http://www.healthoregon.org/radon)  
971-673-0440

### Oregon American Lung Association

[www.lung.org/radon](http://www.lung.org/radon)  
503-718-6141

### Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

[www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon)

### National Radon Program Services at Kansas State University

[www.sosradon.org](http://www.sosradon.org)

## National Radon Program Hotlines:

### National Radon Hotline:

*Purchase radon test kits by phone*

1-800-SOS-RADON (767-7236)

### National Radon Helpline:

*Get live help for your radon questions*

1-800-55RADON (557-2366)

### National Radon Fix-It Line:

*For general information on fixing or reducing the radon levels in your home*

800-644-6999

### National Hispanic Radon Hotline:

*Get live help for your radon questions / Obtener ayuda en vivo con sus preguntas*

866-528-3187

## EPA FREE Consumer Publications:

### A Citizen's Guide to Radon:

*Contains basic information about radon in the home, how to test and read the results.*

[PDF Version](#) – English  
[PDF Version](#) – Spanish

### Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction:

*Contains information about home radon mitigation: radon reduction techniques and radon reduction systems.*

[PDF Version](#) – English

### Home Buyers and Sellers Guide:

*Answers important questions about radon and lung cancer risk, testing and fixing for anyone buying or selling a home.*

[PDF Version](#) – English  
[PDF Version](#) – Spanish

### A Radon Guide for Tenants:

*For renters – explains what radon is, how to find if there is radon in the home and what can be done if there are high radon levels in the home.*

[PDF Version](#) – English