

October 15-21, 2006 is Radon Action Week. Have You Tested Your Home For Radon?

(Governor declares this week as Radon Action Week)

Southwest Michigan is Number 1!!! In what you say... football – well let's wait and see about that. Actually we are number 1 in radon gas levels in, not only Michigan, but the nation. The EPA ranks areas in three zones, 1 having the highest potential and 3 having the least potential for radon. Nine counties in Southern Michigan, including Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties are in zone number 1. This means we have a higher than average chance of having Radon gas problems in our homes than other regions of the state. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in soil and rock and is found throughout the earth's crust. Radon comes into homes through cracks in foundations, or in the case of Michigan basements (often with dirt floors) has unlimited access to your home. Exposure to Radon gas increases the risk of contracting lung cancer over time, based on the levels of radon and time exposed.

Radon Quick Facts:

Nationally 1 in 15 homes has high levels - > 4pci/L

Michigan – 1 in 8 homes would be expected to have elevated levels

Southwest Michigan – Up to 40% could have elevated levels (we're # 1)

Why are you telling me this information now? – Great question. Cold weather is the best time to test your home. Testing must occur under closed house conditions and it is hard to get people to do this in the summer.

How long does the test take? Is it expensive? Testing only takes about 2 days (some more extensive tests can take a week) and the best part is --- it's FREE!! Test kits are available from our offices in Three Rivers, Sturgis, Coldwater and Hillsdale. Not only are the kits free, but postage is paid too! For more detailed information about radon, log on to our web site and read our Radon Fact Sheet, or link to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and you will find even more!

www.bhsj.org

Test kits and staff able to answer your questions are available at:

Coldwater
570 Marshall Road
279-9561 x 106

Hillsdale
20 Care Drive
437-7395 x 111

Three Rivers
1110 Hill Street
273-2161 x 233

Sturgis
209 W. Hatch St.
651-4013

Branch – Hillsdale – St. Joseph Community Health Agency
Your local Public Health Department