

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Date: October 21, 2008

What: *Radon Action Week – October 20-26 – Health Department Encourages Home Testing*

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency and the Department of Environmental Quality are encouraging residents to visit their local health department this week as part of National Radon Action to learn more about this tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas, and pick up a **FREE** test kit to test their home during the upcoming heating season.

Radon Action Week is an annual event which takes place every October. Radon Action Week serves to encourage Americans to test their homes for radon and, as necessary, take action to reduce their exposure to this significant environmental hazard.

Radon is believed to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the leading cause among non-smokers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that it results in more than 20,000 lung cancer cases each year, and cancer is the second leading cause of death in the Branch, Hillsdale, St. Joseph District.

There are no warning signs or symptoms of radon's presence in your home, so each home should be tested. However, Branch, Hillsdale and St. Joseph counties are in an area of Michigan that has the highest recorded levels of Radon, see map, so testing is critical. The red zone on this map represents the highest areas of Radon gas concentration in Michigan.



EPA MAP

Now comes the easy part (or easy button if you prefer). Right now, test kits are FREE. These days when nothing is free, this is a great time to give yourself the piece of mind that your home does not have excessive radon gas present, to protect you and your family.

Closed house conditions are required for radon testing, so homes are best tested during the cold weather (coming soon!) heating season when doors and windows are normally kept closed. If testing indicates an elevated radon level greater than 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/l) of air, additional testing should be done to confirm the problem. The Health Department has a list of local contractors who will do this work should it be necessary.

For more information about radon, visit the Health Department web site at:

www.bhsj.org

Locations

Branch County
570 N Marshall Rd.
Coldwater, MI 49036

Hillsdale County
20 Care Drive
Hillsdale, MI 49242

St. Joseph County
1110 Hill St
Three Rivers, MI 49093