



"Your Local
Health Department"

Branch - Hillsdale - St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH IN THEIR HOMES

RADON – A SILENT KILLER

*Citizens Urged to Test Homes for Radon,
the Second Leading Cause of Lung Cancer in U.S.*

Sturgis, MI — During National Radon Action Month, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency is working to educate tri-county residents about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to protect their homes and families.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), homes located in the tri-county area have predicted average indoor radon screening levels greater than 4 pCi/L, which is considered high. Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, tasteless gas that is dispersed in outdoor air, but which can reach harmful levels when trapped in buildings. Scientists have long been concerned about the health risk of radon, but never before has there been such overwhelming proof that exposure to elevated levels of radon causes lung cancer in humans.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon is responsible for more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths per year. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. "However," says Paul Andriacchi, Environmental Health Director for the tri-county health department, "because you can't see or smell radon, people tend to downplay the health effects and ignore

the possibility that there might be a silent killer in their homes.” He added “Unfortunately, we live in an area of the state where homes are known to have elevated radon levels.”

Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and free. Radon test kits are available from your local county health department office located in Coldwater, Hillsdale or Three Rivers, MI. If a problem is detected, radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to that of many common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed.

The health department urges tri-county residents to take action during this year’s National Radon Action Month by testing their homes for radon. Radon poses a serious threat to our community’s health but there is a straightforward solution. For more information on radon, radon testing and mitigation, and radon-resistant new construction, call your local county health department office of the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency at:

- 517-279-9561, ext. 0106# (Coldwater)
- 517-437-7395, ext. 0311# (Hillsdale)
- 269-273-2161, ext. 0233# (Three Rivers)

Or visit the health department’s website at www.bhsj.org. You can also learn more by visiting the EPA’s National Radon Action Month Website at www.epa.gov/radon/nram.

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