



NEWS RELEASE

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JANUARY IS NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH

RADON-IN-AIR TEST KITS AVAILABLE JANUARY 12-16, 2009

[Greenwich, CT] - - The month of January has been designated as Radon Action Month in Connecticut. The Greenwich Department of Health, for the third year, has obtained funds from the Connecticut Department of Public Health to support radon testing and provide Radon-In-Air test kits to residents of Greenwich for the week of January 12-16, 2009 at a reduced fee of \$15 (compared with the regular fee of \$50).

Radon is present at elevated levels in about one of three CT homes. Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless gas that is dispersed in outdoor air from the soil, but can reach harmful levels when it enters and gets trapped in buildings. Radon comes from rocks and soils in the ground and enters your home through small cracks and other openings in your foundation. If you are exposed to radon gas at elevated levels for long periods of time it can cause lung damage. At levels above 4 Pico curies per liter it can increase one's risk of lung cancer.

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 and is responsible for an estimated 15,000-30,000 U.S. lung cancer deaths each year. In response to this important public health issue and to celebrate National Radon Action Month, the Greenwich Department of Health Laboratory, through a State grant, will offer a reduced cost Radon-In-Air test to Greenwich residents, during the week of January 12, who have not taken advantage of this offer in the past. "We are pleased to offer the special radon testing program to Greenwich

residents for the third year. We continue to offer this program, because radon gas is considered a serious public health hazard. Last year during this program the average radon level obtained from those homes tested were 4.5 Pico curies per liter, slightly over the EPA limit. I urge all residents to test their homes for radon this winter. Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive even when funded kits are no longer available,” stated Director of Health Caroline Calderone Baisley.

The only way to find out if your home has radon is to test for it. The heating season is the best time to test for radon because your home is closed up, and radon levels tend to build up indoors. To qualify for the opportunity to receive the reduced fee radon-in-air test, Greenwich residents, who must be first-time testers, can register by calling 622-7843 between January 12th and the 16th. All qualified residents will be expected to pick up a radon-testing device from the Department’s Laboratory located on the ground floor of Town Hall by appointment. After receiving the test kit it is expected that it be set up in the home the same day and returned to the lab 4 days later.

Tests to analyze radon will be conducted by the Laboratory Monday through Friday, with results being reported by mail. Those who do not qualify for this offer, but wish to test their homes for radon in air, may do so by obtaining a radon test kit in the Laboratory for a fee of \$50.00. All radon in air levels over 4 pCi/l are considered elevated according to the Environmental Protection Agency and should be considered for remediation.

Doug Serafin, Director of the Division of Environmental Services Laboratory states that, “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. Radon, if discovered, can be remediated by qualified contractors for a cost similar to many other home repairs.”

For more information on radon, radon testing and radon mitigation, call the Greenwich Department of Health Laboratory at 203-622-7843, visit the Department of Health website at www.greenwichct.org or visit the CT Department of Public Health website at www.dph.state.ct.us.