

PROTECTING PEOPLE AND FAMILIES FROM RADON

A FEDERAL ACTION PLAN FOR SAVING LIVES

A collaborative effort led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Department Veterans Affairs, and U.S. General Services Administration

Radon continues to pose a critical public health challenge in the United States. Agencies from across the federal government have joined together to address this important national public health issue. The ***Federal Radon Action Plan*** represents historic interagency cooperation that will result in healthier home and school environments for America's families. For the first time, all interagency collaboration on radon has been brought under one strategic approach. The Action Plan contains both an array of current federal government actions to reduce radon risks, and a series of new commitments for future action. With this Action Plan, the federal government is seeking to leverage and advance existing state, local and national programs while leading by example to reduce radon risks simply and affordably. Through its network of residential, educational and daycare facilities, as well as programs that address health, prevention, housing and finance, the federal government is positioned to directly or indirectly influence an estimated 7.5 million homes, schools and daycare facilities.

Three Opportunities: The Framework for the Federal Action Plan

- **Demonstrate the importance**, feasibility, and value of radon testing and mitigation.
- **Provide policy, administrative, and economic incentives** to encourage those who have sufficient resources to test and mitigate, and provide direct support to reduce the risk for those who lack sufficient resources.
- **Build demand** for services from the professional, nationwide radon services industry.

Key Actions in the Plan

- Launch a cross-government outreach initiative to educate families about the health risks associated with radon exposure and the solutions to address these risks.
- Incorporate radon testing and mitigation into federal programs.
- Invest in new standards of practice and update codes for measurement and mitigation in schools and mitigation in multi-family housing.
- Establish incentives that drive testing and mitigation in the private and public sectors.

With this Plan as a catalyst, key state, industry and non-profit sector allies are ready to join efforts with the federal government. Together, these public-private efforts will spur action in the marketplace and create the potential for new jobs.

Understanding the radon health risk

- Radon causes an estimated **21,000 lung cancer deaths** in the U.S. each year and is one of the leading environmental causes of cancer death.¹
- Radon is the **second leading cause of lung cancer** after smoking and the leading cause among non-smokers.²
- An estimated **88 percent of Americans do not know** that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, according to survey data.³

To read the ***Federal Radon Action Plan*** and learn more about this collaborative effort, visit

www.epa.gov/radon/action_plan.html

¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2003. EPA Assessment of Risks from Radon in Homes. Accessed April 16, 2011. Available online at <http://www.epa.gov/rpdweb00/docs/assessment/402-r-03-003.pdf>.

² World Health Organization. 2009. Handbook on Indoor Radon: A Public Health Perspective.

³ "Americans in the Dark About Lung Cancer." Accessed April 19, 2011. National Lung Cancer Partnership. 2011. Available online at: <http://www.nationallungcancerpartnershipnews.org/omk.php?pid=1188&sid=S2011042007190370S6NP&pr=1804>.