

RADON IN WELL WATER

MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where does radon in well water come from?

Radon is a radioactive noble gas that comes from the decay of radium in the soil. Radon is constantly being generated by the radium in rocks, soil and water. Radon can also be dissolved in ground water and can be introduced into the indoor air through the aeration of well water during its use in your house.

2. What are the health effects of radon?

EPA has identified radon as the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States (21,000 yearly).

3. How does radon get into my home?

Foundations, openings in sumps and drains, cracks in walls and floors, crawlspaces and in some cases well water can all be entry points for radon to enter your home.

4. How do I test my home?

Just call the West Virginia Department of Environmental Health at 304-558-2981 and request that a testing kit be sent to your home. These kits contain instructions for how to use the test kit. The test is run over a 2 day period. The test kit will be sent to a laboratory for analysis, and the test results will be mailed back to you. The West Virginia Office of Environmental Health encourages homeowners to have their houses tested for radon.

5. Is radon a problem in drinking water supplies?

Generally, radon is not a concern with public water systems where the radon is released to the outdoor air before reaching home faucets. Radon can enter a home through well water and be released into the residence when the water is running.

6. What do the radon results mean?

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L). EPA recommends that action be taken when the indoor radon levels are 4.0 pCi/L or above. The EPA proposed maximum contaminant level in drinking water for radon is 300 pCi/L.

7. What should I do if I have high readings after testing my house for radon?

A second test will need to be performed to confirm that the radon levels are too high. Once confirming that the radon is at the EPA range of 4.0 picocuries or higher you can contact a West Virginia licensed radon contractor and ask about Radon Mitigation Systems. The cost of a mitigation system will vary from house to house but can be expected to cost between \$1500.00 and \$2500.00.

8. How can I get my well water tested?

There are several laboratories that will perform radon testing on well water.

1. Pace Analytical 304-255-2500
2. Reliance – Bridgeport 304-842-5285
Martinsburg 304-596-2084
3. Pro Lab 954-384-4446

9. What if I have high reading after testing my well water for radon?

What are my options?

Follow up with a second test by a licensed laboratory. If second lab results are also high then install a radon mitigation system for the well.

Aeration Treatment – spraying water or mixing it with air and then venting the air from water before use.

GAC Treatment- Filtering water through granular activated carbon. Radon attaches to the carbon and leaves the water free of radon. Disposing of the carbon may require special handling if it is used at a high radon level or has been used a long time.

10. Approximately what is the cost of the well water radon mitigation?

The cost of a mitigation system will vary from house to house but can be expected to cost between \$1500.00 and \$2500.00.

11. Where can I find a list of qualified and licensed contractors and mitigation specialists?

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources has a list on their radon website at:

<https://www.wvdhhr.org/rtia/radon.asp>