

# Understanding Radon in Saucon Valley

## What is Radon?

Radon gas is colorless, odorless, and relatively nonreactive gas that emits radiation when it decays. It also decays to form a radioactive solid (polonium) that emits additional radiation upon decay. Because it is a gas, radon can migrate into the indoor air and then enter your lungs when inhaled. The decay product (polonium) can stick to lung tissue and create damage as it decays and releases radiation.

## Why does it matter?

Indoor radon gas has been recognized by the Surgeon General as the second leading cause of lung cancer in the US.

## Why is it present in Saucon Valley?

Radon is produced by the spontaneous decay of naturally occurring uranium in rocks, soil, and even certain building stone and masonry. Uranium is common in the metamorphic rocks that form the ridges surrounding the Saucon Valley and also in the limestone and dolomite that underlies it.

## How does it get into my house?

Radon migrates into homes through cracks in the foundation or basement floor, through drainage sumps, and along incompletely sealed line utility lines entrances. It may also be emitted from certain building materials, especially fieldstone. Radon can be dissolved in groundwater and may be released from water when it comes out of faucets and showerheads. Radon in groundwater is usually highest in homes served by private wells. Radon that is ingested in drinking water is considered to have a much lower health risk.

## What can I do to protect my home and family?



**#1**

### TEST

The first step is to have your home tested. There are commercial companies that do testing, or you can buy do it yourself test kits online or at many home centers or hardware stores. You can also have your water tested.



**#2**

### COMPARE

The EPA recommends that radon levels above 4 picocuries/liters be addressed. It is important to test radon in living areas where you spend time



**#3**

### ADDRESS

You can use a variety of methods to reduce radon levels in your home: sealing cracks in floors and walls or increasing ventilation through a system installed by a qualified contractor. Radon in groundwater can be addressed by water treatment systems



## Where can I learn more?

The US EPA has a very comprehensive website that provides more information on Radon Hazards. <https://www.epa.gov/radon>