



# Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety



## January is Radon Action Month

February 2006

During National Radon Action Month, we are reminded of the serious danger that radon gas poses to us in our homes. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon causes about 20,000 deaths from lung cancer annually in the United States. The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking and the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers.

Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the soil and is colorless, odorless, and tasteless. It is produced from the natural breakdown of the uranium found in most rocks and soils.

Typically, radon moves up through the ground and into your home through cracks and other holes in the foundation. Your home traps radon inside, where it can build up. Any home may have a radon problem. This means new and old homes, well-sealed and drafty homes, and homes with or without basements.

Testing to measure for this dangerous gas in the indoor air we breathe is simple, inexpensive, and effective. If elevated levels are detected, we can protect

### RADON GETS IN THROUGH:

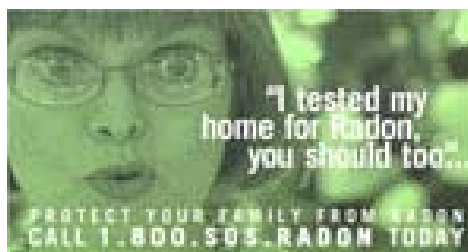
1. Cracks in solid floors
2. Construction joints
3. Cracks in walls
4. Gaps in suspended floors
5. Gaps around service pipes
6. Cavities inside walls
7. The water supply



ourselves by installing equipment to remove the radon from our homes.

In 2005, REHS began an initiative to reassess radon concentrations in nearly all University buildings. This will be a multi year program beginning with the residential spaces and progressing through the rest of the University community.

Protecting your health against the threat of radon gas begins with testing your home.



For more information about radon, try these links:

EPA "Citizen's Guide to Radon"  
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/pubs/citguide.html>

NJDEP Radon Section  
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/rpp/radon/index.htm>

Real Estate Testing Guide  
<http://www.nj.gov/dep/rpp/radon/dodont.htm>

Health Physics Society  
"Ask the Experts"  
<http://hps.org/publicinformation/ate/cat7.html>