



What is radon?

Radon is:

- A naturally occurring gas that seeps into buildings from the surrounding soil.
- The second leading cause of lung cancer.
- The number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, according to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates.
- Responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year. About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked.

Do schools need to test for radon?

Yes, if the building has never been tested or past test results are unavailable, a radon test should be done. The building should be re-tested after any renovations to the building or HVAC system. In addition, re-testing should be done periodically, at least every 5 years. Retesting should be done in all buildings and in all ground contact rooms, regardless of prior results.

Does the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) perform radon testing in schools?

No, ODH does not conduct radon testing in schools.

Who can test for radon in schools?

- ODH licensed radon testers or mitigation specialists.
- School personnel – The Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) 3701-69-02 (B)(2) states, “An individual, business entity or government entity may perform radon testing on a building or real property that the individual, business entity or government entity owns or leases.”

If the school owns or leases the building, then school personnel may test the school without holding a radon tester or mitigation specialist license. If the decision is made to have school personnel perform radon testing, ODH strongly recommends the school personnel undergo training and that the testing be performed in the manner as outlined in the Ohio Administrative Code. However, ODH strongly recommends a licensed ODH radon tester or mitigation specialist conduct testing.

When should radon testing in schools be conducted?

Schools need to be tested while the building is occupied and when the students are present. Testing should be conducted on weekdays when using a two- to five-day test. The US Environmental Protection Agency’s *Radon Measurement in Schools* states, “Schools should schedule their testing during the coldest months of the year.” Therefore, radon testing in schools needs to be conducted during the heating season, specifically between the months of October and March.

Some schools and homes near us have reported finding no elevated radon levels.

Do we still need to test for radon?

Yes, radon levels in buildings vary with local geology, building structure and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, schools in close proximity can exhibit dramatically different radon levels. The only way to know if the rooms in your school have elevated radon levels is to conduct radon testing.