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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Eastern Highlands Health District Urges Residents to Protect Their Health:
Test Your Home for Radon, a Silent Killer

This January, the Eastern Highlands Health District is educating residents about the dangers of radon exposure and encouraging them to take action to protect their health and their homes. Radon gas is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Health officials estimate that radon is responsible for more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States. The good news is that health problems from radon exposure can be prevented by taking some simple steps to protect your home.

Radon is present at elevated levels in about one of every five homes in Connecticut. Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, tasteless gas that is dispersed in outdoor air, but which can reach harmful levels when trapped in buildings. Scientists have long been concerned about the health risk of radon, but never before has there been such overwhelming proof that exposure to elevated levels of radon causes lung cancer in humans.

Director of Health Robert Miller comments that “all Connecticut homes should be tested for radon and action should be taken to reduce high levels. Radon is particularly dangerous because you can’t see or smell it, however, a simple and inexpensive test can save lives.” Radon test kits can be purchased at local hardware and home improvement stores or directly from radon testing companies online. Additionally, kits can be purchased by visiting EHHD’s website (www.ehhd.org/radonawareness) and clicking on the link to the National Radon Program. Kits can also be ordered by calling the American Lung Association of New England by calling 1-800-LUNG USA.

Tests vary in how they detect radon and the amount of time required to complete sampling. Do-it-yourself short term tests typically take two to seven days to complete. During the testing period the small test kit sits on a shelf or other out-of-the-way location and absorb radon from the building. Once the testing period is complete, test containers are sent to a laboratory for analysis. Most test kits include the cost of lab analysis and an addressed envelope for submission. You will know the radon level in your home in a matter of weeks.



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If you do find that your home has high levels of radon, there is a solution. Simple repairs such as sealing cracks in your floors and walls or changing the flow of air in your building can protect you and your family. Repairs should be done by a certified contractor and should be done as quickly as possible to ensure optimal health of you and your family. For more information on ordering a test kit and a link to the Environmental Protection Agency's Consumer Guide to Radon Reduction, please visit www.ehhd.org/radonawareness. You can also find free radon awareness giveaways at any Town Hall within the Eastern Highlands Health District (*offer valid until supplies run out*). Please contact EHHD's Community Health and Wellness Coordinator by using the contact information above with any other questions or concerns.