

Polk County Radon Levels Higher than State Average

Polk County, MN – Polk County Public Health is urging all community members to test their homes for radon, a naturally occurring gas that comes from the soil and can accumulate inside homes. You can't see, smell, or taste radon, but it could be present at dangerous levels in your home, posing significant health risks when inhaled. Radon exposure is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in the United States, resulting in approximately 21,000 deaths annually, according to the Minnesota Department of Health.

Minnesota has unusually high radon levels due to its unique geology and how homes are operated with our cold climate. Recent findings show that Polk County radon levels are higher than the state average. Approximately 70% of homes tested in Polk County have dangerous levels of radon, compared to 40% of homes statewide. The average radon level in Minnesota is 4.2 pCi/L (picocuries of radon per liter of air), more than three times higher than the national average of 1.3 pCi/L. Polk County's average level is 8.2 pCi/L, significantly higher than the state and national averages.

"The only way to know if you have high radon levels is to test," said Sarah Reese, Polk County Public Health Director. "Radon testing is simple, and it's crucial for protecting your family's health. We strongly encourage all residents to test their homes every 2-5 years, especially during the winter months when radon levels are often at their highest."

Polk County Public Health offers free radon test kits that can be picked up at the Crookston, East Grand Forks, or McIntosh offices. Test kits are also available at hardware stores, other agencies, and licensed professionals listed on the [Minnesota Department of Health \(MDH\) Radon Testing website](#).

If a high radon level is detected, there are effective mitigation systems available to reduce radon exposure and ensure a healthier home environment. For additional information on radon testing, mitigation, radon maps, and licensure in Minnesota, visit the following resources:

- [Radon in Homes](#)
- [Radon in Minnesota](#)

Polk County Public Health also offers free Environmental Public Health Assessments to help identify potential environmental risks in your home. For more information, please contact Polk County Public Health at 218-281-3385.

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