

**For Immediate Release**

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**Polk County Public Health Raises Awareness During Radon Action Month**

Polk County, MN – In recognition of Radon Action Month 2026, Polk County Public Health is urging residents to test their homes for radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the soil and can build up indoors. Radon is invisible and odorless and can enter homes through small openings in foundations and lower levels, such as cracks, sump pits, and gaps around pipes. It can build up to unsafe levels indoors, especially during the winter when homes are more tightly sealed.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, and the leading cause among nonsmokers. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, radon exposure causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year nationwide.

Minnesota has some of the highest radon levels in the country due to its geology and cold climate. Recent data show that radon levels in Polk County are higher than both the state and national averages. About 70% of homes tested in Polk County exceed the recommended action level, compared to about 40% statewide. Minnesota's average radon level is 4.2 pCi/L—more than three times the national average of 1.3 pCi/L—while Polk County's average is 8.2 pCi/L, more than six times the national average.

"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 offices in Crookston, East Grand Forks, and McIntosh. Test kits are also available at hardware stores, through other agencies, or from licensed professionals listed on the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Radon Testing website. If high radon levels are found, effective mitigation systems are available that can greatly reduce radon levels and help create a healthier home.

For more information about radon testing, mitigation, radon maps, and licensed professionals in Minnesota, visit: [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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