

School Radon Testing

Hire or Self?

1. Licensed Radon Tester
2. Cost
3. Staff Time/Paperwork
4. Liability

Hiring

1. Use licensed tester (Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is licensing agency)
2. Cost
 - Typically more than self-testing
 - Depends on number of rooms to be tested
 - Get quotes!
 - What is included?
3. Staff Time/Paperwork
 - Typically reduces amount of staff time spent on testing activities
4. Liability
 - May reduce school liability

Self-Testing

1. If a school employee conducts testing, licensure not required by ODH.
 - Licensure is strongly recommended
 - See list of ODH-approved training providers
 - Requires 16 hours of ceu's every 2 years to maintain license
2. Cost
 - test kits - should be able to purchase kits for around \$10 each
3. Staff Time/Paperwork
 - Requires increased staff time for testing activities
 - At least one Monday and Friday to place and retrieve test kits
 - Ordering and mailing kits
 - Maintaining testing records, report results, etc
4. Liability
 - May increase school liability
 - How to ensure testing is done correctly?
 - School responsible for lost/damaged kits?

Self-Testing Steps

1. **Obtain copies of EPA manuals and READ them!**
 - *Radon Measurement in Schools*
 - *Radon Measurement in Schools Workbook*
 - *Reducing Radon in Schools*
 - *Radon Prevention in the Design and Construction of Schools*

2. **Determine Optimal Testing Dates**
 - Students are in class
 - During winter heating season
 - Plan for about 200 kits maximum placed per day
 - May need to schedule more than one week
 - Place all kits on a Monday, retrieve kits on Friday of the same week

3. **Determine Number of Test Kits Needed**
 - One kit for each classroom, office area, workspace
 - Include library, gymnasium, auditorium
 - Exclude kitchen, restrooms, boiler rooms, janitorial closets, shop classrooms, garages
 - Include enough kits for duplicates (10% of total tests or 50 kits, whichever is less) and blanks (5% of total tests or 25 kits, whichever is less)

4. **Order kits (see ODH list of approved laboratories)**

5. **Prepare kit logs**
 - To keep track of kits, rooms and location – see sample log

6. **Notify staff of intended testing dates**
 - Windows should remain closed for at least 12 hours prior to and throughout duration of test
 - Notification can help avoid kits being thrown away because staff “didn’t know what it was”

7. **Place test kits (Monday)**
 - Look for an area that is at least a few feet away from doors, ventilation units, and windows
 - Placement should be between 2-6 feet off floor (normal breathing zone)
 - Kits should not be placed along an outside wall of the building
 - Record kit number, room number, kit location
 - Supplies – Scissors, trash box, a/v cart, log sheets, writing utensils

8. Retrieve test kits (Friday)

- Retrieve each test kit placed on Monday
- Record retrieval on log sheet
- Seal kit and throw away sponge and plastic hook
- Supplies – Trash/empty boxes, a/v cart, log sheets, writing utensils

9. Ship kits to lab

- Kits should be mailed on Friday and arrive at lab no later than the following Monday morning
- Can ship all kits in one box
- Insurance on shipping?

10. Receive results from lab

- Should have results in about 1 week
- Available online, via fax, mail, email

Retesting

- Required if initial test results are 4.0pCi/l or higher
- Short term testing for results greater than 10.0 pCi/l
 - Short term testing should occur as soon as possible
- Long term testing for results between 4.0 and 10.0 pCi/l
 - Long term test kits can be purchased for around \$25 each
 - Long term testing should begin during first month of following school year, end during final month of that school year (August to May)

Elevated Levels

- Consult *Reducing Radon in Schools: A Team Approach* (USEPA)
- Contact Elizabeth James with Ohio Department of Health at 1-800-523-4439 or 614-644-0174 for assistance

Additional Considerations

- Provide information to staff who would like to test their homes -- radon can be present in elevated levels in schools, homes, and most other buildings
 - www.epa.gov for radon brochures (or contact RAPCA)
 - RAPCA @ 937-225-4898 for answers to radon questions
- Have this information on hand for parents and students who are interested in testing their homes – radon testing in schools will get people talking!
- Radon in the curriculum? Radon is a natural part of the environment and can be incorporated into many science and health lesson plans
- Radon Challenge – RAPCA has helped local schools coordinate radon challenges among students, classes, and other districts. This is one way to get the word out about radon and make it fun for your school community to learn about radon. RAPCA can help out with distribution of materials, presentations, and incentives.