

January is Radon Action Month in Illinois

Press Release - Tuesday, January 04, 2022

SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) is urging residents to take time in the coming weeks to test their home for radon as part of **Radon Action Month**. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Radon related health risks are preventable with a simple home detection test.

Radon comes from the natural breakdown of uranium and radium in the soil. This odorless, colorless, tasteless gas is found in the air that we breathe in buildings, homes, offices and if not properly mitigated can reach drastically high levels causing major health concerns. It's estimated more than 1,100 people in Illinois develop radon-related lung cancer each year.

"With more people staying home, working and learning remotely, this is a great time to test your home for radon," **said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau**.

"Radon enters our homes through cracks and other holes in the structure's foundation or crawl space. Homes trap radon where it can build up once inside. It's important to note that radon can be found in older buildings and new constructions. A simple home test is an inexpensive and easy way to know if you and your family is at risk of exposure."

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the American Lung Association in Illinois (ALAIL) are teaming up to increase public awareness of radon risks and ways to reduce radon exposure. IEMA and ALAIL announced the continuation of two statewide contests that encourage students to use their creative talents to promote radon awareness. The Radon Video Contest asks Illinois high school students to create a 30 second commercial style video, while the Radon Poster Contest asks middle school students to create a poster that will encourage people to test their homes for radon.

	<u>Radon Poster Contest</u>	<u>Radon Video Contest</u>
Eligibility	Students Age 9-14	All High School Students
Registration Status	Now Open	Now Open
Submissions Due	March 18	March 18
First Prize	\$200	\$1000 (student), \$300 (school)
Second Prize	\$150	\$750 (student), \$200 (school)
Third Prize	\$100	\$500 (student), \$100 (school)
Honorable Mention	n/a	\$250 (student)

All contest prizes are funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Both contests are sponsored by IEMA, ALAIL and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5.

The top posters and videos from the 2021 state contests can be viewed on IEMA's radon website at www.radon.illinois.gov. The website also includes information about radon and lists of licensed measurement and mitigation professionals. Information is also available through IEMA's Radon Hotline at 800-325-1245.

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