

Radon / NRPB National Radiological Protection Board.

Contributors

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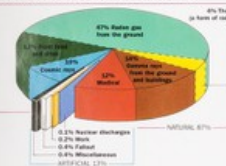
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OUR BIGGEST RADIATION DOSE

We are all exposed to radiation all the time. Most people receive their greatest exposure from natural radon, mostly from radon. This leaflet describes what radon is, where it is found, why it presents a risk to health, the official advice, and the remedies that are available to reduce radon levels.



UNITS
The quantity of a radioactive material is measured in becquerels.
1 becquerel (1 Bq) = 1 atomic disintegration per second.
The average amount of radon in every cubic metre of air in houses in the UK is 20 becquerels; that is, the amount of radon is such that 20 atoms disintegrate every second in every cubic metre.
Radiation dose is measured in millisieverts or millirem.
A concentration of 20 becquerels per cubic metre of air gives a dose of 1 millisievert - this is the average annual dose from radon received by people in the UK.

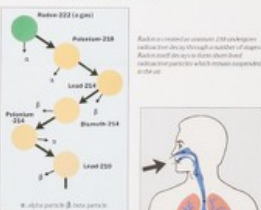
WHAT IS RADON?



Radon is a natural radioactive gas. It comes from the material that contains naturally occurring radium and uranium in the surface of the ground. We all breathe it in throughout our lives. Chlorine is dangerous in some contexts but radon is very low.



However, radon concentrations in some areas such as certain public houses, schools and other places of work, where radon has built up to high concentrations, alongside other long-range atmospheric pollutants, can be a problem.



Radon is a colourless, odourless, tasteless, and non-toxic gas. It is a noble gas, meaning it does not react with other elements. It is produced by the natural decay of uranium and thorium in the ground. Radon enters buildings through cracks in the walls and floor, and through gaps in the roof and around chimneys and pipes.



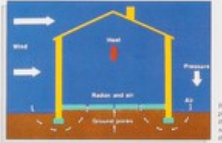
Radon



RADON IN HOMES

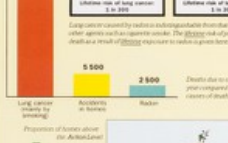
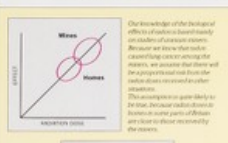


A national survey carried out by NRPB showed that most houses in the UK have radon levels with an average of about 20 becquerels per cubic metre. In comparison, however, higher levels were found.



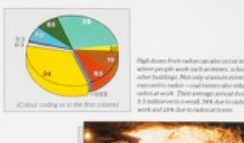
For information about having your home tested, write to Radon Survey, National Radiological Protection Board, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon OX11 0RQ.
For information about grants for remedial work contact your local council.

RISKS AND REMEDIES



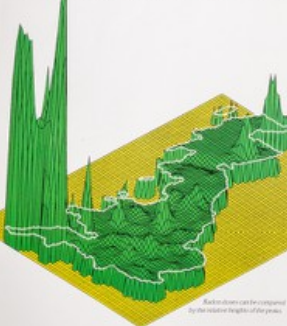
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RADON IN THE WORKPLACE



For information about having your home tested, write to Radon Survey, National Radiological Protection Board, Chilton, Didcot, Oxon OX11 0RQ.
For information about grants for remedial work contact your local council.

Radon



FURTHER READING

On radon:
The Housebuilding Guide to Radon (from Department of the Environment, General Housing Branch, 20, Mark Lane, London EC3R 7DF)
Radon Questions and Answers (from NRPB)

On radon protection generally:
The Building in a Hazardous Area (from NRPB)
NRPB at a Glance: Radon in Protection: Radon Protection: Radon Doses, Maps and Measurements
Living with Radon (in sale at HMSO)
Price £3.50 ISBN 0 85632 237 2