



Radon

A Fact Sheet for the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon

Q. What is radon?

A. Radon is a naturally occurring gas that is formed by the radioactive decay of uranium. Uranium can be present in soils.

Q. Why should I be concerned about radon?

A. Since radon gas may be present in soils, foundation cracks and crawlspaces may allow it to migrate into buildings and accumulate to levels that may represent a health concern.

Q. What are normal levels of radon?

A. The EPA has established an action level for radon of 4.0 pCi/L (picocuries per liter).

Q. What should be done if normal levels of radon are exceeded?

A. If an occupied area of a building exceeds the action level, it may be necessary to take corrective actions in order to reduce the levels of radon. Typical corrective actions may include modifying existing ventilation equipment, adding ventilation in cases where none existed before, sealing cracks in concrete floors and walls, and installing vapor extraction equipment beneath the floors and walls that come in contact with the ground.

Q. Should I test for radon?

A. There is no statutory requirement for radon testing. However, the Oregon Health Division has identified certain zip code areas that have documented experiences of elevated radon levels in tests of residences. The Archdiocese plans to conduct radon testing at its facilities located within these zip code areas. Pastors, principals, and business managers at those locations will be contacted soon with details of the testing process.

Q. What if my facility is not within the identified zip code areas and I want to test for radon?

A. Any additional radon testing at Archdiocesan parish/school facilities should be coordinated with the Archdiocesan Property Office and conducted by a qualified environmental company.

Q. Whom should I contact if I have further questions about radon?

A. **Contact:**

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