

## **Short Term Radon Testing Checklist**

For reliable test results, follow this *Radon Testing Checklist* carefully. Testing for radon is not complicated. Improper testing may yield inaccurate results and require another test. Disturbing or interfering with the test device, or with closed-house conditions, may invalidate the test results and is illegal in some states. If the seller or qualified tester cannot confirm that all items have been completed, take another test.

### **Before Conducting A Radon Test**

1. Notify the occupants of the importance of proper testing conditions. Give the occupants written instructions or a copy of this Guide and explain the directions carefully.
2. When doing a short-term test ranging from 2-4 days, it is important to maintain closed-house conditions for at least 12 hours before the beginning of the test and during the entire test period.
3. When doing a short-term test ranging from 4-7 days, EPA recommends that closed-house conditions be maintained.
4. If you conduct the test yourself, use a qualified radon measurement device and follow the laboratory's instructions. Your state may be able to provide you with a list of do-it-yourself test devices available from qualified laboratories.
5. If you hire someone to do the test, hire only a qualified individual. Some states issue photo identification (ID) cards; ask to see it. The tester's ID number, if available, should be included or noted in the test report.
6. The test should include method(s) to prevent or detect interference with testing conditions or with the testing device itself.
7. If the house has an active radon-reduction system, make sure the vent fan is operating properly. If the fan is not operating properly, have it (or ask to have it) repaired and then test.

Closed-house conditions means keeping all windows closed, keeping doors closed except for normal entry and exit, and not operating fans or other machines which bring in air from outside. Fans that are part of a radon-reduction system or small exhaust fans operating for only short periods of time may run during the test.

### **During a Radon Test:**

1. Maintain closed-house conditions during the entire time of a short term test, especially for tests shorter than one week in length.
2. Operate the home's heating and cooling systems normally during the test. For tests lasting less than one week, operate only air-conditioning units which re-circulate interior air.
3. Do not disturb the test device at any time during the test.
4. If a radon-reduction system is in place, make sure the system is working properly and will be in operation during the entire radon test.

### **After a Radon Test:**

5. If you conduct the test yourself, be sure to promptly return the test device to the laboratory. Be sure to complete the required information, including start and stop times, test location, etc.
6. If an elevated level is found, fix the home. Contact a qualified radon-reduction contractor about lowering the radon level. EPA recommends that you fix the home when the radon level is 4 pCi/L or more.
7. Be sure that you or the radon tester can demonstrate or provide information to ensure that the testing conditions were not violated during the testing period.

The EPA's *Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction* ([www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/consguid.html](http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/consguid.html)) provides the following guidelines for radon mitigation:

## How To Select A Contractor

**Get Estimates:** Choose a contractor to fix a radon problem just as you would choose someone to do other home repairs. It is wise to get more than one estimate, to ask for references, and to contact some of those references to ask if they are satisfied with the contractors' work. Also, ask your [state radon office](#) or your county/state consumer protection office for information about the contractors. Use this check-list when evaluating and comparing contractors and ask the following questions:

### YES NO

- Will the contractor provide references or photographs, as well as test results of 'before' and 'after' radon levels of past radon reduction work?
- Can the contractor explain what the work will involve, how long it will take to complete, and exactly how the radon reduction system will work?
- Does the contractor charge a fee for any diagnostic tests? Although many contractors give free estimates, they may charge for diagnostic tests. These tests help determine what type of radon reduction system should be used and in some cases are necessary, especially if the contractor is unfamiliar with the type of house structure or the anticipated degree of difficulty. See "[Radon Reduction Techniques](#)" for more on diagnostic tests.
- Did the contractor inspect your home's structure before giving you an estimate?
- Did the contractor review the quality of your radon measurement results and determine if appropriate testing procedures were followed?

Compare the contractors' proposed costs and consider what you will get for your money, taking into account: (1) a less expensive system may cost more to operate and maintain; (2) a less expensive system may have less aesthetic appeal; (3) a more expensive system may be best for your house; and, (4) the quality of the building material will affect how long the system lasts.

Do the contractors' proposals and estimates include:

### YES NO

- Proof of state certification and/or professional proficiency or certification credentials?
- Proof of liability insurance and being bonded, and having all necessary licenses to satisfy local requirements?
- Diagnostic testing prior to design and installation of a radon reduction system?
- Installation of a warning device to caution you if the radon reduction system is not working correctly?
- Testing after installation to make sure the radon reduction system works well?
- A guarantee to reduce radon levels to 4 pCi/L or below, and if so, for how long?

## The Contract

Ask the contractor to prepare a contract before any work starts. Carefully read the contract before you sign it. Make sure everything in the contract matches the original proposal. The contract should describe exactly what work will be done prior to and during the installation of the system, what the system consists of, and how the system will operate.

Many contractors provide a guarantee that they will adjust or modify the system to reach a negotiated radon level. Carefully read the conditions of the contract describing the guarantee. Carefully consider optional additions to your contract which may add to the initial cost of the system, but may be worth the extra expense. Typical options might include an extended warranty, a service plan, and/or improved aesthetics.

Important information that should appear in the contract includes:

1. The total cost of the job, including all taxes and permit fees; how much, if any, is required for a deposit; and when payment is due in full.
2. The time needed to complete the work.
3. An agreement by the contractor to obtain necessary permits and follow required building codes.
4. A statement that the contractor carries liability insurance and is bonded and insured to protect you in case of injury to persons, or damage to property, while the work is done.
5. A guarantee that the contractor will be responsible for damage and clean-up after the job.
6. Details of any guarantee to reduce radon below a negotiated level.
7. Details of warranties or other optional features associated with the hardware components of the mitigation system.
8. A declaration stating whether any warranties or guarantees are transferable if you sell your home.
9. A description of what the contractor expects the homeowner to do (e.g., make the work area accessible) before work begins.

The EPA publishes a number of informative documents about radon for consumers. Many of the radon related booklets are available through the EPA's website ([www.epa.gov/radon/](http://www.epa.gov/radon/)) or through state radon offices.

The EPA's *Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction* provides guidelines for [radon mitigation](#). The *Home Buyer's and Seller's Guide to Radon*, <http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/hmbyguid.html> includes the following guidelines regarding *radon measurements*: