



Date: December 26, 2018

FOR RELEASE THE WEEK OF:
January 1, 2019

Contact: Terry Eimen, PIO Officer
(815)432-2483
teimen@co.iroquois.il.us

January is National Radon Action Month

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated January 2019 as National Radon Action Month. The purpose of the designation is to remind everyone of the serious danger that radon gas poses to us in our homes. According to Terry Eimen, Director of Environmental Health for the Iroquois County Public Health Department, it is estimated that radon causes about 21,000 deaths from lung cancer annually in the United States. About 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. The U.S. Surgeon General warns that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking and the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers.

Eimen describes radon as a natural radioactive gas that is released in rock, soil, and water from the natural decay of uranium. "One of the problems with radon is that it is colorless, odorless, and tasteless," said Eimen. "The only way to tell if you have radon gas in your home is to test for it with a test kit," he said. Eimen said it is imperative for the public to know that 26% of the homes tested in 2018 in Iroquois County tested at or above 4 Picocurie per liter (pCi/L). The recommended action level to fix your home is 4 pCi/L. If your test results are at 2 pCi/L you should consider fixing your home.

So what is the risk of having radon in your home?

At level 4pCi/L, the radon you inhale is the same as:

- *Smoking 8 cigarettes per day*
- *Having 200 chest X-rays per year*

Your risk at 2pCi/L is the same as:

- *Smoking 4 cigarettes per day*
- *Having 100 chest X-rays per year*

As your radon number doubles so does your risk!

So at 10pCi/L your risk is like smoking more than a pack a day!