

## Here's My Take on Radon Gas in Your Home, Its Risks, and Its Mitigation

During the current legislative session the risks of radon gas in our homes and what to do about it was raised when two state legislators put forth a bill — killed in a House committee — to require sellers to test for radon before putting their homes on the market and to provide those test results to prospective buyers.

The bill's sponsor described radon as "a radioactive gas that kills hundreds of Coloradans each year due to lung cancer." I have seen no studies, however, that provide reasonable documentation of this claim. With so many other contributing factors to lung cancer, how do you prove that someone got lung cancer specifically because of exposure to radon in their home?

Regardless of the validity of the danger, requiring sellers to provide test results would only endanger Coloradans further, which is why I

testified against it. The bill would have allowed sellers to buy a \$10 radon kit, place it anywhere in their home and mail it into a lab for analysis, then provide the report to prospective buyers as an indicator of the radon level in their home.

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that seeps out of the ground virtually everywhere. As such, we are exposed to it in highly dispersed form every day when we are outdoors. The danger comes when it seeps from the ground into your home, where it is contained instead of being dispersed into the atmosphere. If the level is high enough, it could certainly pose a health risk, especially to children who sleep in or spend significant time in that area.

A proper test for radon is done with an electronic device, placed by a professional in the lowest living area of a home, which sam-

ples the air once an hour for 48 hours. If the device is unplugged and moved, or if windows and doors are left open during the test, it will be obvious in the print-out. Such a test costs \$100 to \$150, but it is virtually tamper proof. Every buyer should pay for such a test instead of depending on a seller's \$10 test. Tests provided by sellers would only result in fewer buyers spending money on a valid test.

If radon is shown to be above the EPA's "action level" of 4 picocuries per liter, mitigation can cost \$800 to \$1,200, depending on the home. The process involves installing a constantly running fan which sucks air from the gravel bed under your home's concrete slab and expels it at the roof line. Cracks in the concrete slab are also caulked and sump pits sealed. If the home has a crawl space, ventilating it (which also controls humidity and mold accumulation) can also reduce the radon level.

### REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH**,  
Realtor®

### This Week's Featured New Listing

#### Lookout Mountain Home Has Unique Appeal!

The yellow traffic sign across from this home at 22074 Crestmoor Road. says it all: "Kids Playing & Dog Napping in Road." There's no traffic noise here! This remodeled home's 0.68-acre lot ad-



joins Apex Park, with pond and stream, hiking and biking trails. Inside are 5 bedrooms, 3 baths, and 3,658 sq. ft. of living space. The finished walk-out features a huge hobby room. The home has a 2-car attached garage and is newly painted, with new appliances and a new roof. It goes on the market on April 15th. Carrie Lovingier is the listing agent.

**Jim Smith**



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