
Providing Childcare Facilities Radon Education Materials & Test Kits

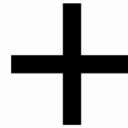
Oregon Radon Awareness Program
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Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division
Environmental Public Health Section



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Environmental Public Health Section

Program Partnership



- Radon content experts. (Oregon Radon Awareness Program)
- Provide support and education when it comes to radon testing.
- Funded by EPA

- Non-regulatory statewide program designed to help childcare professionals.
- Protecting kids from potentially harmful chemicals
- Funded by CDC

Oregon Choose Safe Places (CSP)

Program Goal:

- Reduce and prevent toxic exposures in childcare settings.

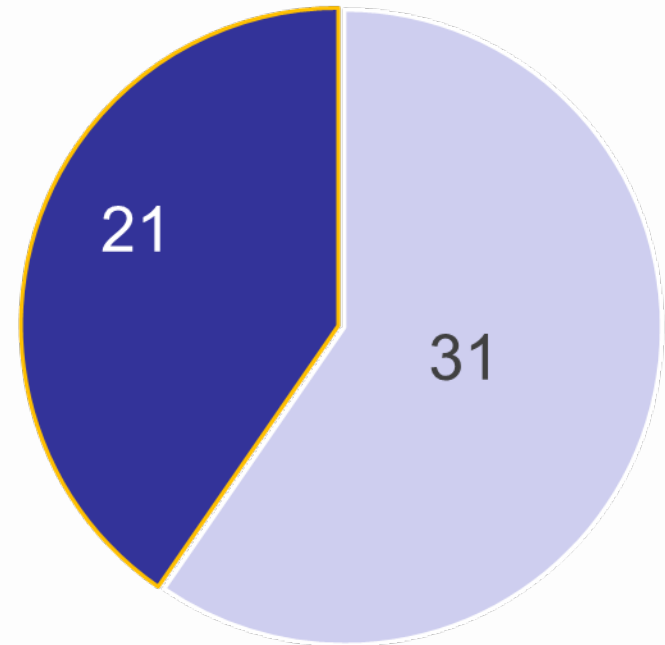
CSP Main Project:

- Developed a checklist of environmental health considerations to help childcare providers identify and address hazards at their programs.
- Program staff provide individual consultation to those who filled out the check list.
- This checklist had **RADON** listed on it.



Why focus on Radon?

- Received COVID supplemental funding (extra monies)
- Noticed a trend relating to radon when providing individual consultation to daycare providers.
- Saw an opportunity to partner with Oregon Radon Awareness Program to create educational materials.



- Completed Environmental Checklist
- Indicated No Radon Test in the Past 5 Years

Radon Educational Materials

Dear Child Care Professional,

Oregon's [Choose Safe Places](#) program and the Early Learning Division's (ELD) Office of Child Care are partnering to provide [free](#) radon test kits to child care programs across Oregon. You are receiving this letter because your child care program is located in an area where there is a high or undetermined risk of radon and you may be interested in testing your building.

This letter and enclosed resources are to provide you with more information about radon and support you in testing your building.

What is radon? Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive gas that enters buildings through pipes or cracks in the foundation and can be trapped indoors, exposing people inside to radiation. Exposure to high radon levels over many years can lead to negative health effects. After smoking, radon is the second-most common cause of lung cancer.

Why should I test for radon? The more radon someone breathes in over their lifetime, the more likely they are to develop lung cancer. Children are more vulnerable because they breathe more frequently. Testing for radon gas is required in Oregon's public schools. Radon testing isn't required in private homes or in child care settings outside of schools, but we recommend testing your child care location to better understand the risk in your building.

Radon testing helps us understand radon risk across Oregon. Oregon's [Radon Awareness Program](#) uses results from past radon testing to estimate radon risk by zip code. You can see radon risk by zip code by visiting Oregon's Radon Awareness Program webpage (www.healthoregon.org/radon) or viewing [this table](#) (click [HERE](#) or type this into your browser: <https://tinyurl.com/Zp8687em>)

However, we don't have information for all of Oregon's zip codes. Additionally, all buildings let in different amounts of radon. The best way to learn the risk of radon in your building is to test for the gas.

How do I test for radon? There are several ways to test your building for radon gas, including long-term monitoring tests or short-term self-tests. [Choose Safe Places](#) is giving child care programs a [free short-term self-test kit from Air Chek](#), a [nationally-accredited radon testing company](#). Air Chek is not part of the Oregon Health Authority.

Watch for a package in the mail from Air Chek. The test kit will contain detailed directions on how to complete the test, mailing* it to Air Chek's lab for analysis, and seeing your results online.

*NOTE: Returning your test kit to Air Chek is free using standard United States Postal Service (USPS) delivery. Due to delays, paying for expedited delivery with USPS, UPS or FedEx to ensure that your test kit is received within 12 days of test completion is recommended.

The [Choose Safe Places program](#) welcomes any questions about radon or reducing environmental health hazards at child care programs. Email us at Oregon.CSP@dhsosha.state.or.us. Thank you for your ongoing work to support all of Oregon's young children and families to learn and thrive in healthy environments!

~ The Choose Safe Places Team




RADON & CHILDREN'S HEALTH FACT SHEET


Radon & Children's Health

What is Radon?


Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas. The natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water produces radon. You can find uranium in soil all over the world. Some places have higher radon risk than others. Exposure to high levels of radon happens when radon gas builds up in buildings and houses.



You can't see it.



You can't smell it.



You can't taste it.

Radon is found all over Oregon



*Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Did You Know?

Oregon school districts are required to test school buildings for radon every 10 years. (ORS 332.341 and 332.345)



How Radon Can Effect the Health of Children

- A child has different lung shape, size and breathing rates compared to adults. This makes them more vulnerable to radon exposure.
- The risk of lung cancer in children resulting from radon exposure may be almost twice as high as the risk to adults exposed to the same amount of radon.
- If children are exposed to high radon levels *and* tobacco smoke, the risk of lung cancer is at least 20 times greater.*



Can I reduce radon exposure?

- Do-it-yourself radon test kits can be purchased in most hardware stores or online.
- The only way to know if you have radon is to test your home or building.



How does radon enter a home?

- The main source of radon in a home is the ground beneath it. Radon moves up through the soil and enters through cracks and holes in the foundation.
- Radon gas can become trapped inside a home and raise to high levels. Any home can have a radon problem. This includes homes that are new, old, well-insulated, drafty, with or without a basement.
- If you find you have high radon levels in your home and your water comes from a well, test your water for radon. If you have radon in your well water, showering, washing dishes and laundering can release radon gas into the air. The only way to know if you have high levels of radon in your private well water is to test for it.



Did you know?

Radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer. The leading cause of lung cancer is cigarette smoking.

Radon levels in your home can differ from your neighbor's.

Radon can be in homes of any construction type. This includes slab-on-grade foundations, crawlspaces and basements.

Testing is the only way to know if you have high levels of radon in your home.



You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the Oregon Radon Awareness Program, Public Health Division at 971-673-0440 or email radon.program@dhsosha.state.or.us or we accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.

OHA 9406 (05/2020)

Radon causes lung cancer



Have you tested your home for radon?



HAVE YOU TESTED YOUR HOME FOR RADON? BROCHURE



Radon Educational Materials

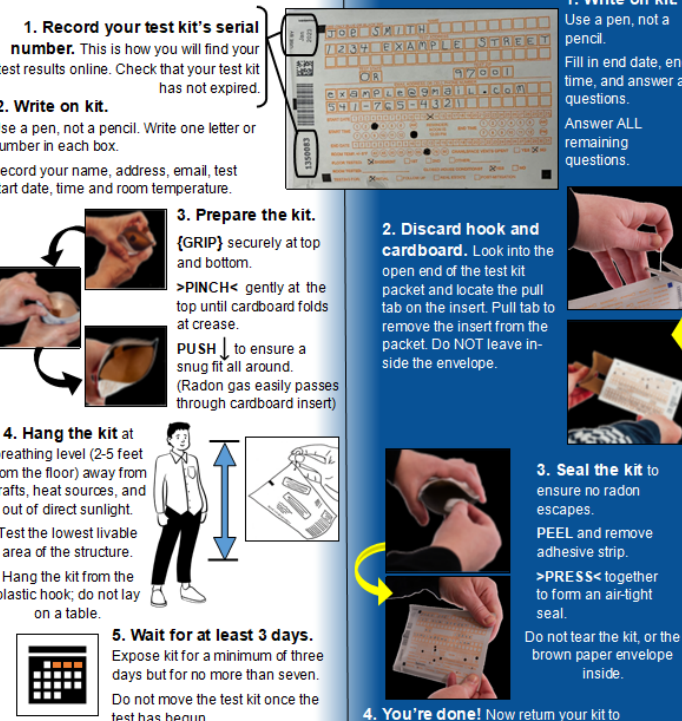
START TEST 🕒

Close all outside windows and doors 12 hours before starting your test.


- Record your test kit's serial number.** This is how you will find your test results online. Check that your test kit has not expired.
- Write on kit.** Use a pen, not a pencil. Write one letter or number in each box.
Record your name, address, email, test start date, time and room temperature.
- Prepare the kit.**
{GRIP} securely at top and bottom.
>PINCH< gently at the top until cardboard folds at crease.
>PUSH< to ensure a snug fit all around. (Radon gas easily passes through cardboard insert)
- Hang the kit at breathing level** (2-5 feet from the floor) away from drafts, heat sources, and out of direct sunlight.
Test the lowest livable area of the structure.
Hang the kit from the plastic hook; do not lay on a table.
- Wait for at least 3 days.**
Expose kit for a minimum of three days but for no more than seven.
Do not move the test kit once the test has begun.
- Do not open doors or windows.**
Keep ALL windows in structure closed.
Close all doors behind you when entering or leaving.

END TEST 🛑

- Write on kit.**
Use a pen, not a pencil.
Fill in end date, end time, and answer all questions.
Answer ALL remaining questions.
- Discard hook and cardboard.** Look into the open end of the test kit packet and locate the pull tab on the insert. Pull tab to remove the insert from the packet. Do NOT leave inside the envelope.
- Seal the kit to ensure no radon escapes.**
PEEL and remove adhesive strip.
>PRESS< together to form an air-tight seal.
Do not tear the kit, or the brown paper envelope inside.
- You're done!** Now return your kit to the lab as soon as possible.
Use FedEx or UPS next day delivery for best results. (See reverse side for details) *NOTE: We recommend paying for expedited shipping to ensure your test is received within 12 days of completion.



TRANSLATED TEST KIT INSTRUCTIONS



What Happens After Testing for Radon?

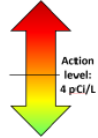
While the test kit is open, it will trap radon particles inside. After following the instructions to seal the test kit, place test kit in the mail. The test kit will be sent to Air Chek, where they will measure the amount of radon in the test kit.

What happens after I test? Your test results will be available online to you only.


The Oregon Health Authority/Choose Safe Places and the Early Learning Division/Office of Child Care will not see your test results. If you choose to, sharing your test results helps us understand radon risk across Oregon.

What will I learn from my test results? Radioactive gas is measured in "picocuries." Picocurie is shortened as "pCi." Your test results will be shown in pCi of radon for every liter of air in your building (pCi/L).

- The Environmental Protection Agency recommends taking action when results are at or above 4 pCi/L of radon. If your results are at or above 4pCi/L, we recommend testing again. [Choose Safe Places](#) will provide you with a second short-term test kit at no cost if your results are above 4.0 pCi/L.



Action level:
4 pCi/L



Order a second test kit [online using this link](https://forms.office.com/g/PvVKdrBC2k) (<https://forms.office.com/g/PvVKdrBC2k>), sending an email to [Choose Safe Places \(Oregon.CSP@dhsoha.state.or.us\)](mailto:Choose_Safe_Places@dhsoha.state.or.us), or scanning this QR code with your camera to fill out the order form on your mobile phone or tablet.

If your building's radon levels are lower than 4 pCi/L, then no action is needed at this time. We recommend testing again in five years.

What if radon levels are high in my building? Radon mitigation is a process to reduce radon gas levels in a building. We recommend contacting a licensed radon mitigation professional if:

- The average of two **short-term tests** is 4 pCi/L or above, or
- The result of a **long-term test** was 4 pCi/L or above.


There are several affordable ways to reduce radon levels in your building.

Can [Choose Safe Places](#) help with radon mitigation? We are not radon mitigation professionals, nor are we funded to help pay for radon mitigation in child care programs. [Choose Safe Places](#) can help you understand your test results, learn about how radon affects health, and find licensed radon professionals. We recommend contacting Oregon's Radon Awareness Program for radon mitigation questions by emailing radon_program@dhsoha.state.or.us or calling 971-673-0440.

Questions? The [Choose Safe Places program](#) welcomes any questions about radon or reducing environmental health hazards at child care programs. Please contact us by emailing Oregon.CSP@dhsoha.state.or.us or scanning the QR code above to ask a question or leave feedback.

Thank you for your ongoing work to support all of Oregon's young children and families to learn and thrive in healthy environments!

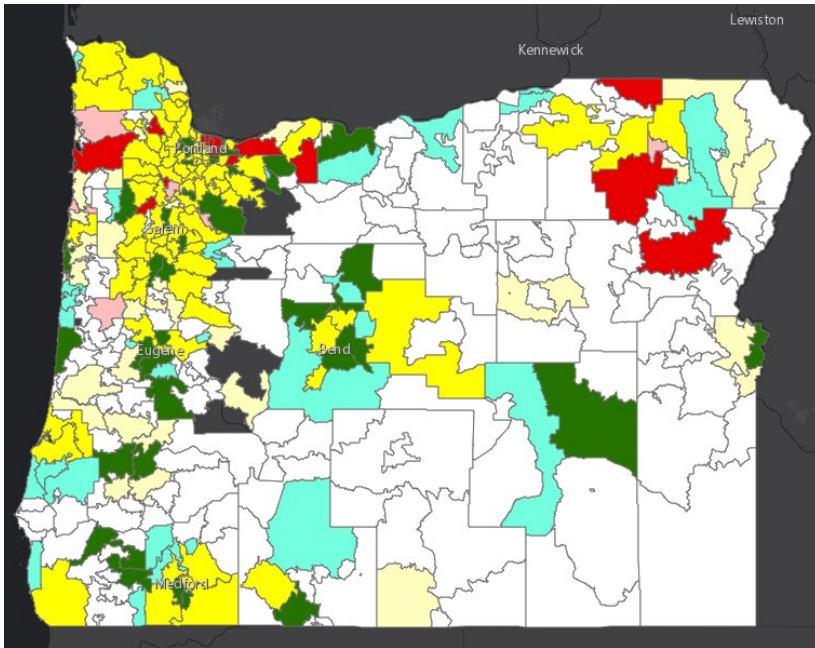
~ The Choose Safe Places Team



AFTER TESTING GUIDE

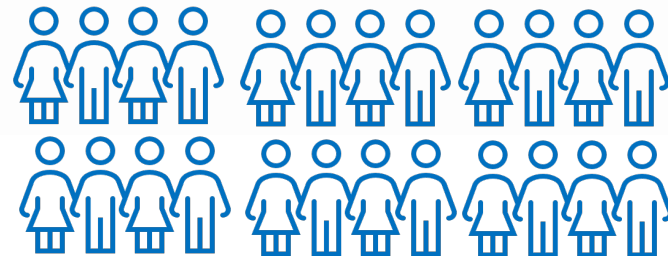
Radon Test Kit Distribution

Oregon Radon Risk Map by zip code



750 Childcare locations
identified in high risk or
unidentified zip codes

Estimated that 750
locations have the
capacity to care for
15,000 children



Results



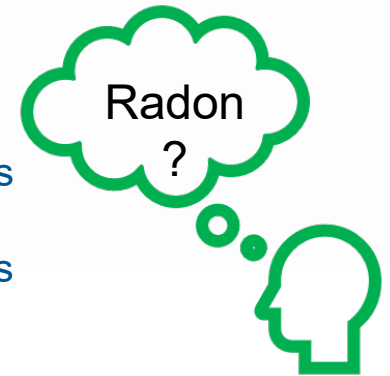
11 Languages: Arabic, Burmese, Chinese (Traditional & Simplified), Farsi, Korean, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Somali, & Vietnamese

5 educational materials created



750 test kits sent, 5% return rate (October 1st)

Hundreds of providers made aware of environmental hazards such as radon.



Successes

- Utilize extra funding and collaboration to create new educational materials, reach a new target audience and distribute radon test kits.
- Eliminating the barrier of purchasing radon test kits.
- Aligned program missions and goals

Challenges

- Program capacity and time was limited. Ran out of time/funding.
- Time constraints did allow for any individualized follow-ups with these providers as Choose Safe Places ended on 3/31/23.

Questions?

Oregon Radon Awareness Program

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www.healthoregon.org/radon