

Increased Radon Testing with a Radon Detector Lending Program in Four Rural Public Libraries

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Disclosures

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- The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIEHS or the Kentucky Department for Public Health.

Radon on the RADAR

Study Overview

Goal: To increase access to radon testing and affordable radon mitigation in rural communities using geohealth methodology applying a citizen science approach

- Aim 1: Recruit, train 60 individuals across four counties as citizen scientists
- Aim 2: Use citizen scientist to collect data on home radon levels
- Aim 3: Pilot a library loan program for electronic radon detectors
- **Aim 4: Full launch of library loan program**
- Aim 5: Develop coalitions in each county to sustain efforts of radon awareness, testing, and mitigation

Why Partner with Public Libraries?

Public libraries are...

- ubiquitous and have low barriers to access
- are trusted community voices
- are experts at sharing resources and information
- already lend more than books



"Lending tools" by blmurch is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

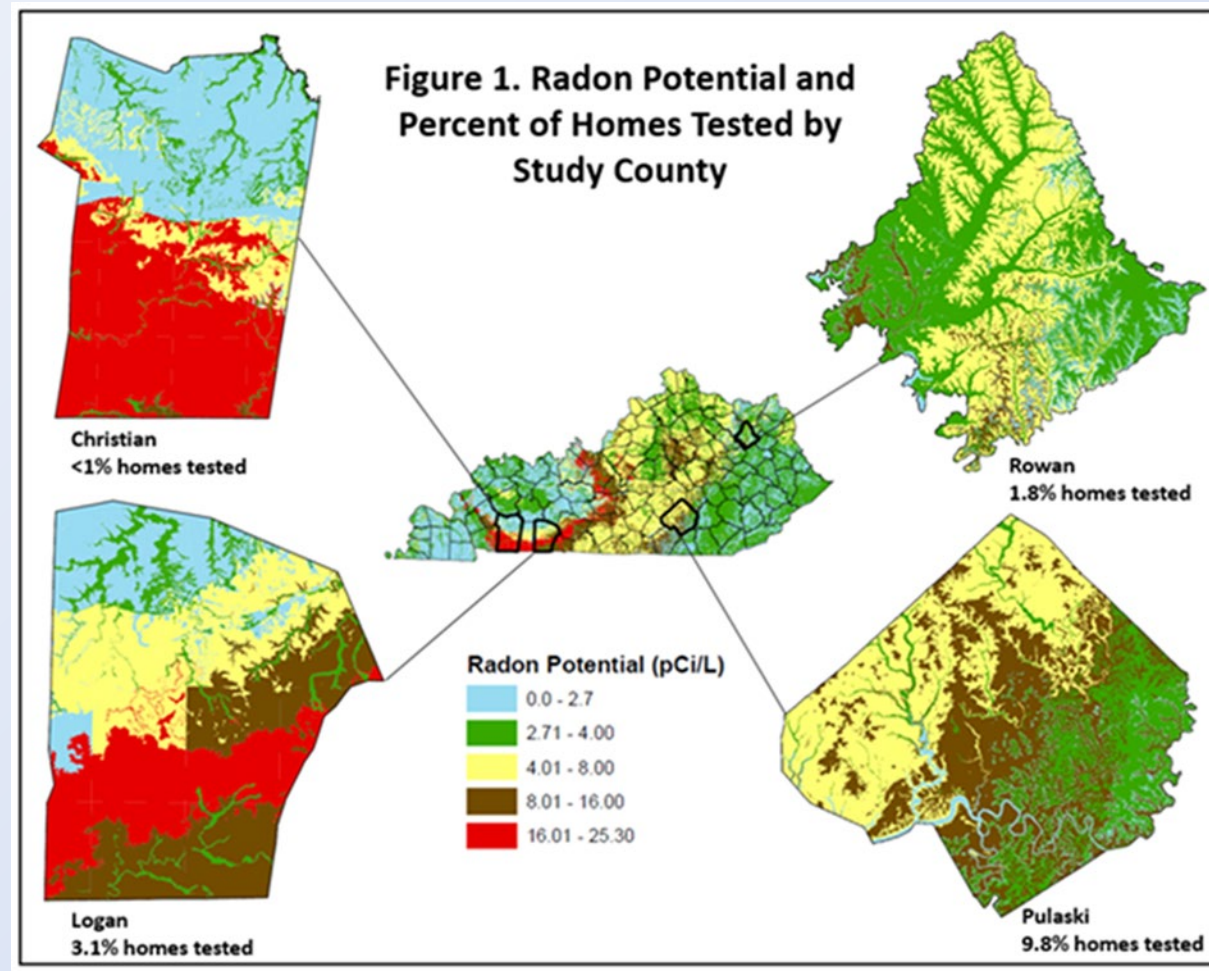


"Cake Pan Collection" by Travelin' Librarian is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Many libraries loan...

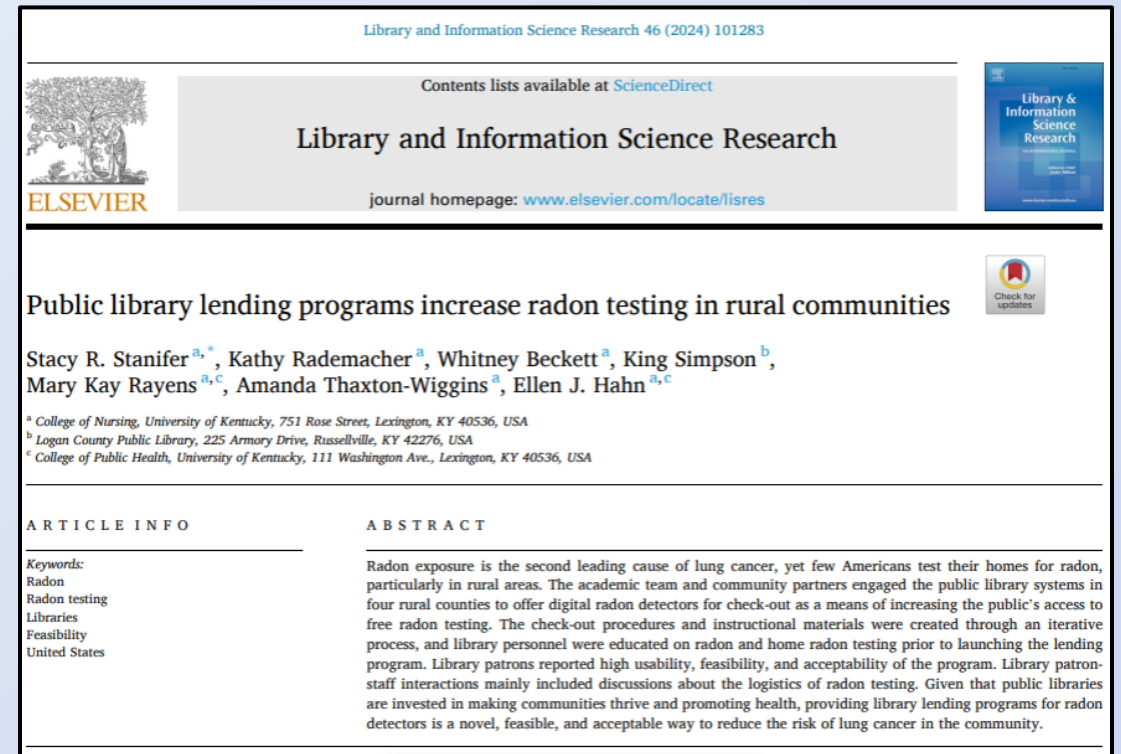
- Tools
- Cake pans
- Musical instruments
- Museum passes
- Laptops
- Mobile hotspots
- More!

Radon Detector Kit Lending Program



Developing the Library Lending Program

- Planning Meetings
- Created kit contents
- Generated materials for the public
- Library staff training
- Pilot Testing
 - Messaging revised
 - Materials revised
 - Library staff training



Stanifer SR, Rademacher K, Simpson K, Rayens MK, Thaxton-Wiggins A & Hahn EJ. (2024). Public library lending programs increase radon testing in rural communities. *Library & Information Science Research*, 46(1).
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2024.101283>

Overview: Library Lending Program

- 50 kits per library
- Available to community members:
 - Age 18+
 - Valid library card
- No charge for borrowing kit
- Spanish materials available
- Invited to participate in optional research study
- Paid and unpaid marketing inside and outside of libraries



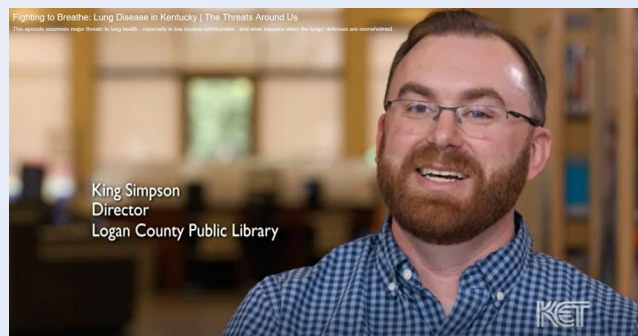
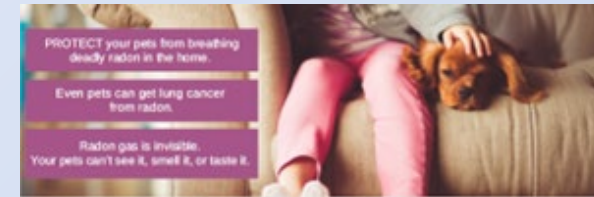
Coalition Support

- Community-led coalitions to promote the library lending program, radon mitigation, and general awareness of radon
 - Built into existing coalition (e.g., Logan County Health Coalition) or new group
 - Library staff
 - Partner organizations (health departments, family resource staff, cooperative extension, etc.)
 - Citizen scientists



Image Credit: Commonwealth Journal

Marketing Strategies



RADON?
Any home can have Radon, does yours?
The Pulaski County Public Library is working with the University of Kentucky to provide home radon detectors at the library at no cost to you.

Home owners can check-out a Home Radon Detector and test their home for two weeks. At the end of the testing, home owners will know their average home radon level.

Check-out a FREE Test Kit at Pulaski County Library.

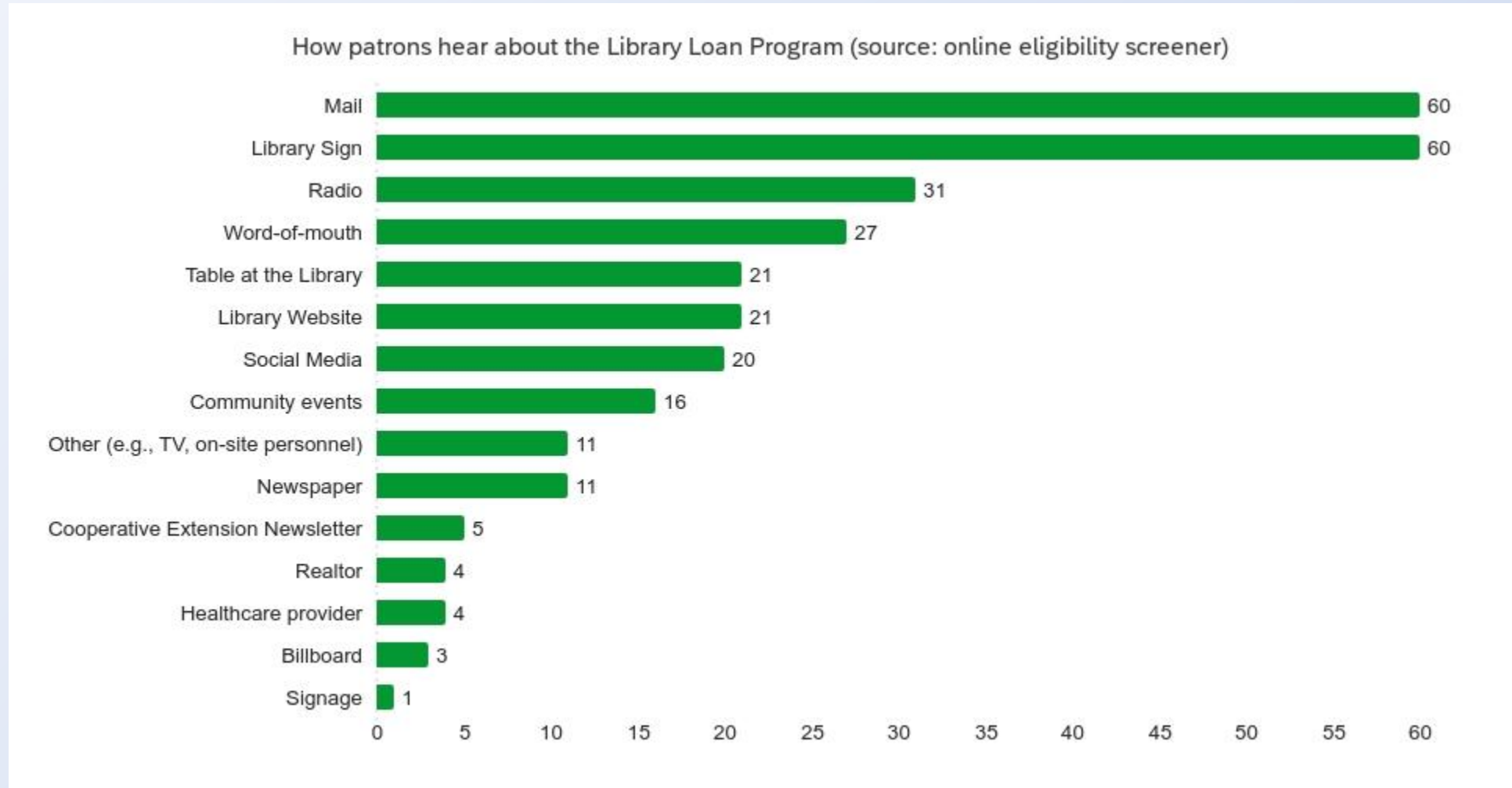
QUICK FACTS ABOUT RADON

- Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas from the decay of uranium found in rocks and soil.
- Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer.
- Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among never-smokers.
- Radon is colorless, odorless, tasteless, and causes no immediate symptoms.
- Most exposure to radon occurs in the home, where the gas enters and becomes trapped.
- The only way to know how much radon is in your home is to test for it!

QUESTIONS?
Contact: Anna Jones
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ajones@soahec.org



Marketing Strategies



Risk Messaging

RADON?

Any home
can have
Radon,
does
yours?



Check-out a
FREE Test Kit at the
Rowan
County Library.



<https://rowancountylibrary.org/>

**University of
Kentucky**
College of Nursing
An Equal Opportunity University

Home Radon Testing in Rowan County

Radon is a silent killer.
Do you know your number?

Join the radon study.
It's quick, easy, private, and saves lives.
Ask the library staff to learn more.



Test to know your number.

Only **2 of 100 homes** in Rowan County have
been tested for radon, as of 2023.

Help us reach our goal: **30 of 100 homes**
tested for radon by 2024.



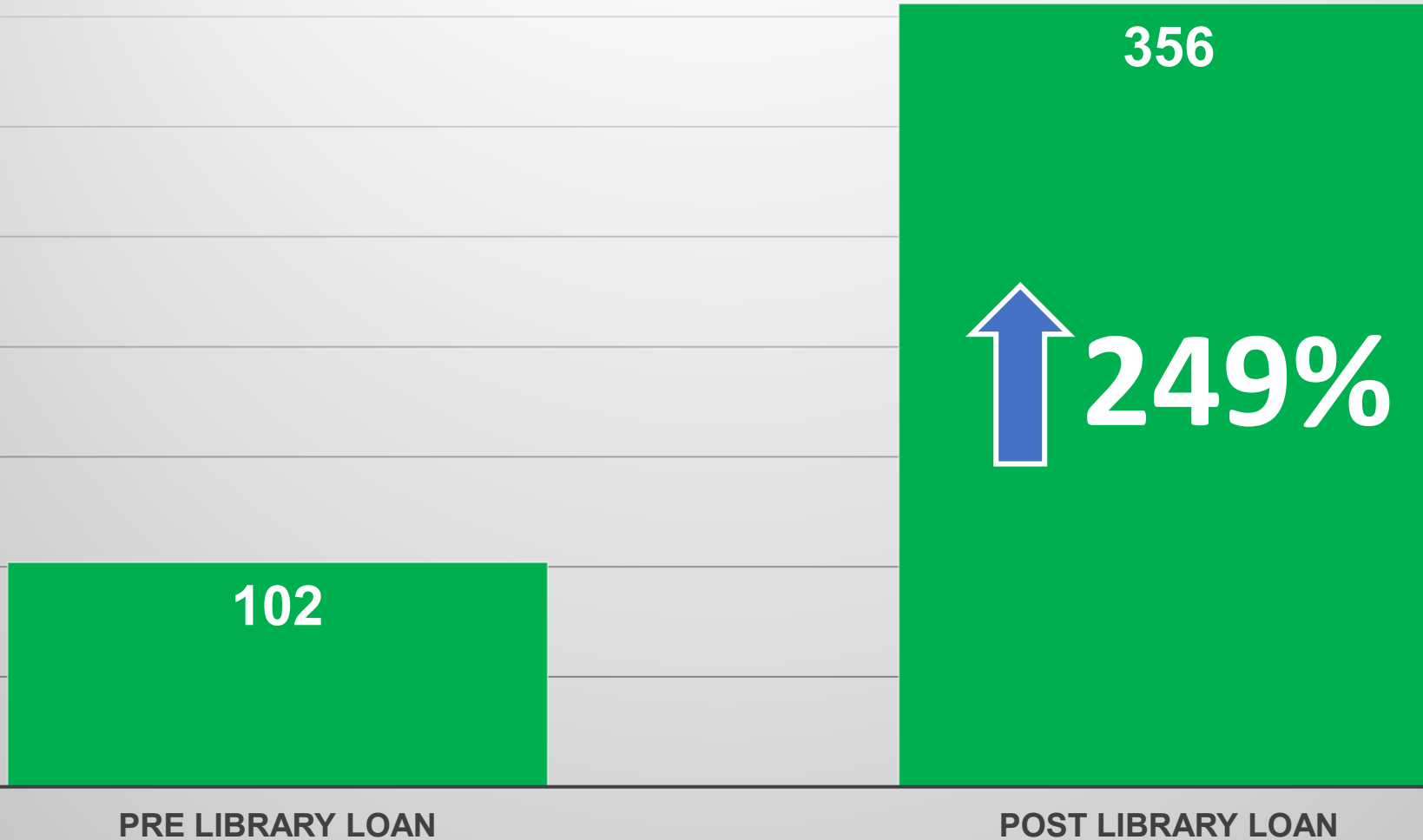
Check out a FREE radon detector today.

Protect your community.
Join the radon study.

Protect Yourself and Your
Loved Ones from Radon



Average Number of Annual Radon Tests Completed in Four Study Counties



What Study Participants Said....

I am very happy to have completed this test as my house was built about 110 years ago and I was nervous about getting a high number. But I didn't.

We appreciate how easy it was to check out and take part in the survey. We had been concerned about our potential radon but were relieved by our readings. If the numbers had been high, we would have taken immediate action because of cancer concerns.

I'm very happy to have been able to test for free. Wish I had been aware sooner.

#1 It was FREE. #2 It was EASY. #3 It provides VALUABLE DATA. #4 It gave me PEACE OF MIND

I appreciate the program. Had been meaning to check the radon for years. It appears that I should have checked it years ago!

We are very proud of our local library. Thanks for using them in your research. Perhaps you might send some of your faculty to our area to talk about other research that you are conducting.

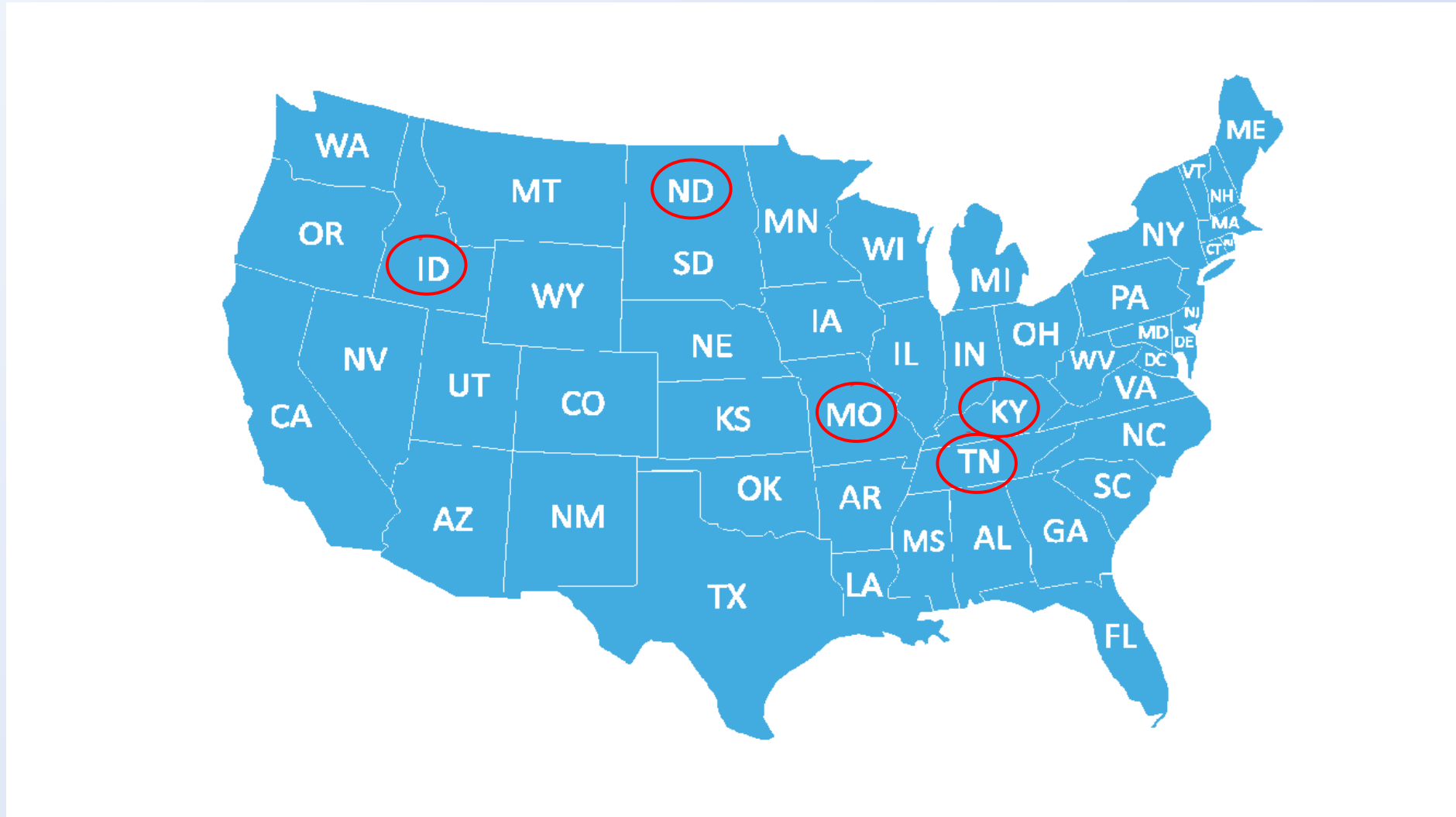
There's a stigma about the radon number and re-sell of your home, so that makes me leery to encourage people to test. If we get our house mitigated, then I think that would make it easier to tell people. But some have warned me not to test or told me not to tell anyone we had it done. Our number was much higher than expected.

Radon Action Plan

What do the numbers mean and what should I do?

- FAQ
- Provides guidance on how to locate a certified radon mitigation professional
- Invitation to discuss radon level and potential next steps with a member of our research team
 - Discuss financial assistance for radon mitigation (e.g., USDA Office of Rural Development; Habitat for Humanity)
- Links to additional resources for smoking cessation and radon
- Available in English & Spanish

Library Loan Program Interest Inquiries



Future of the Library Lending Program

- Expand into other counties/states?
- Automate report back



Image Credit: Kentucky Educational Television

Questions?

- Dr. Ellen Hahn, principal investigator ejhahn00@email.uky.edu
- Dr. Stacy Stanifer, project manager stacy.stanifer@uky.edu

