

# Testing Trends: Radon in Schools

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# Speaker

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In Minnesota, **2 in 5** homes  
have high radon.





Indoor Environments <sup>TM</sup> 2025 - Radon and Vapor Intrusion Symposium

# Children are a vulnerable group

- Children take in twice the amount of radon compared to adults due to their small lungs and higher respiratory rate
- During the school year, children spend a lot of their time at school



# School radon testing is voluntary

- The only way to measure the radon risk is to test the school. If there are high levels of radon, a mitigation system can be installed to reduce radon.
- There is no law in Minnesota that schools need to test for radon. Testing is voluntary.



# Radon Testing Current Law

No testing or mitigation requirement

123B.571: Subd. 3.Reporting.

A school district that has tested its school buildings for the presence of radon shall report the results of its tests to the Department of Health in a form and manner prescribed by the commissioner of health. A school district that has tested for the presence of radon shall also report the results of its testing at a school board meeting.



# Project Goals

**Purpose:** determine radon testing patterns for public schools and relationship to equity metrics

Outcomes:

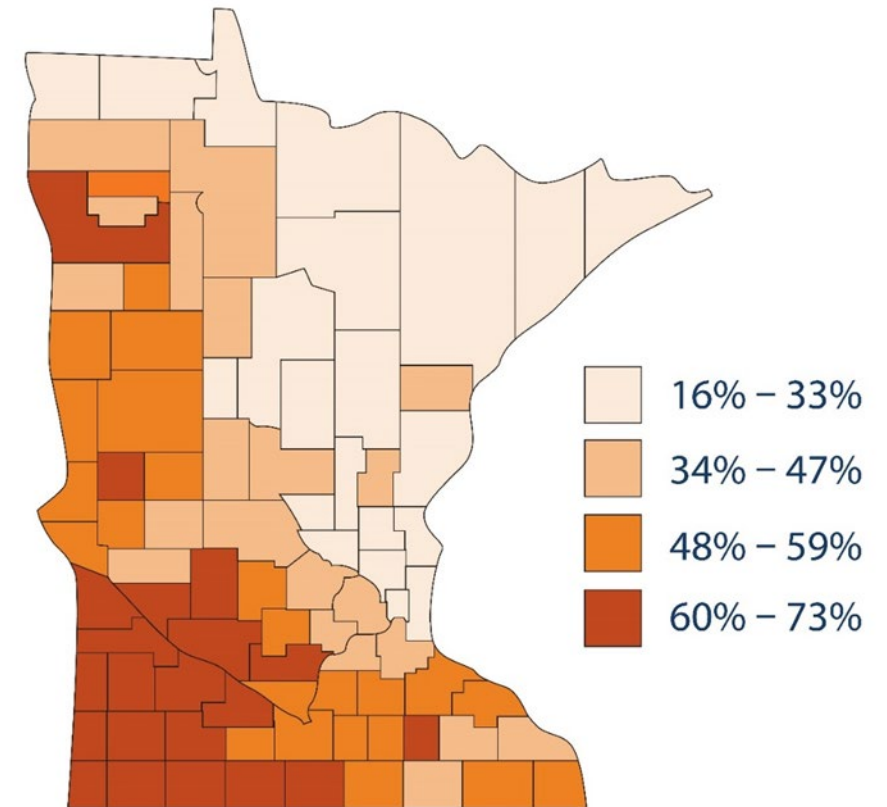
- Determine if there are inequities in radon testing for public schools
- Improve awareness and education on school testing
- Ultimately reduce radon exposure in vulnerable population



# Radon in MN Schools

- Homes
  - ~40% of MN homes  $\geq 4$  pCi/L
- Schools
  - 1% of rooms  $\geq 4$  pCi/L
  - 16% of public schools  $\geq 1$  room  $\geq 4$  pCi/L

Percent of MN Properties  $\geq 4$  pCi/L (mostly homes)



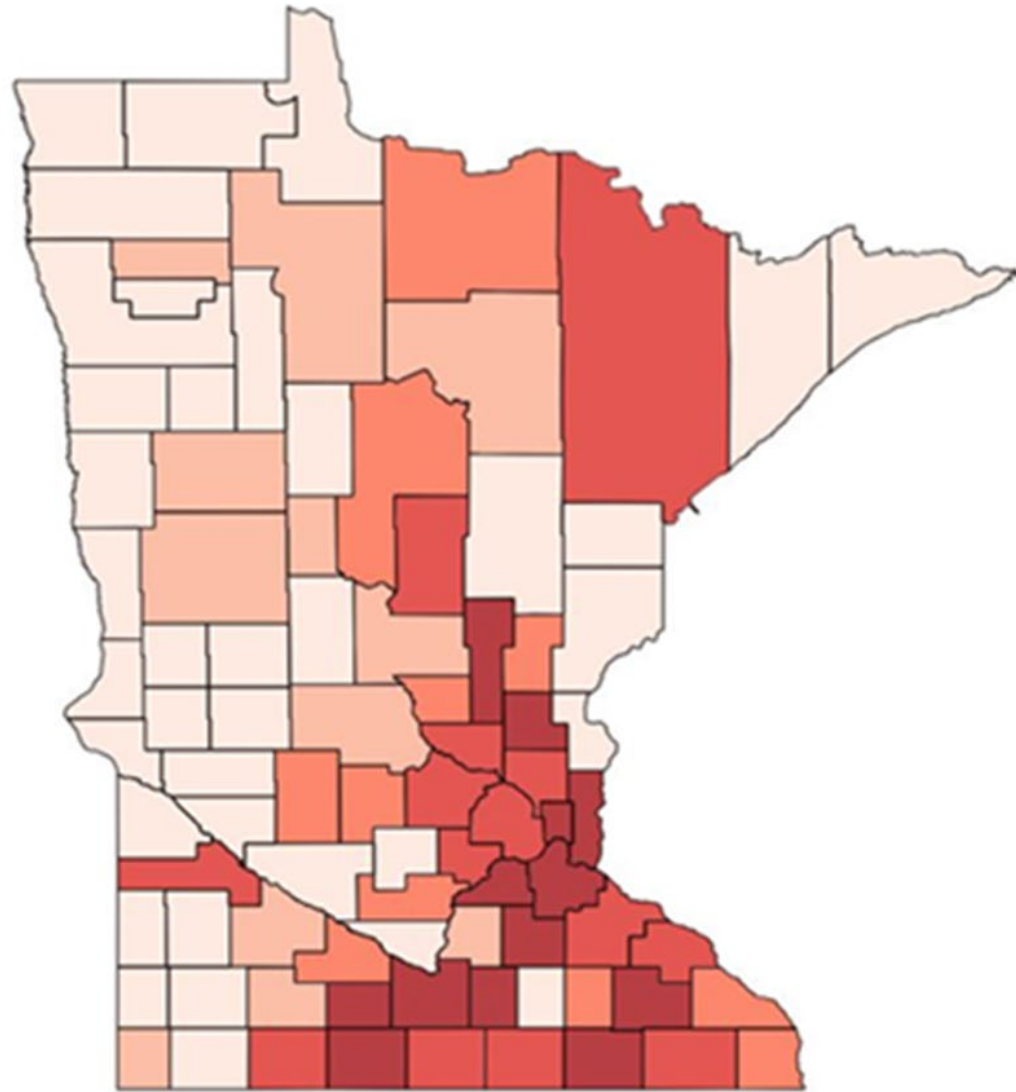
# Less than half Minnesota public schools have tested for radon

- **Less than half of (39%)** of schools\* had at least one room tested for radon.
- **A quarter (25%)** of school districts had at least one school tested for radon.

Public school radon testing is not evenly distributed throughout Minnesota

Percent of schools tested in each county

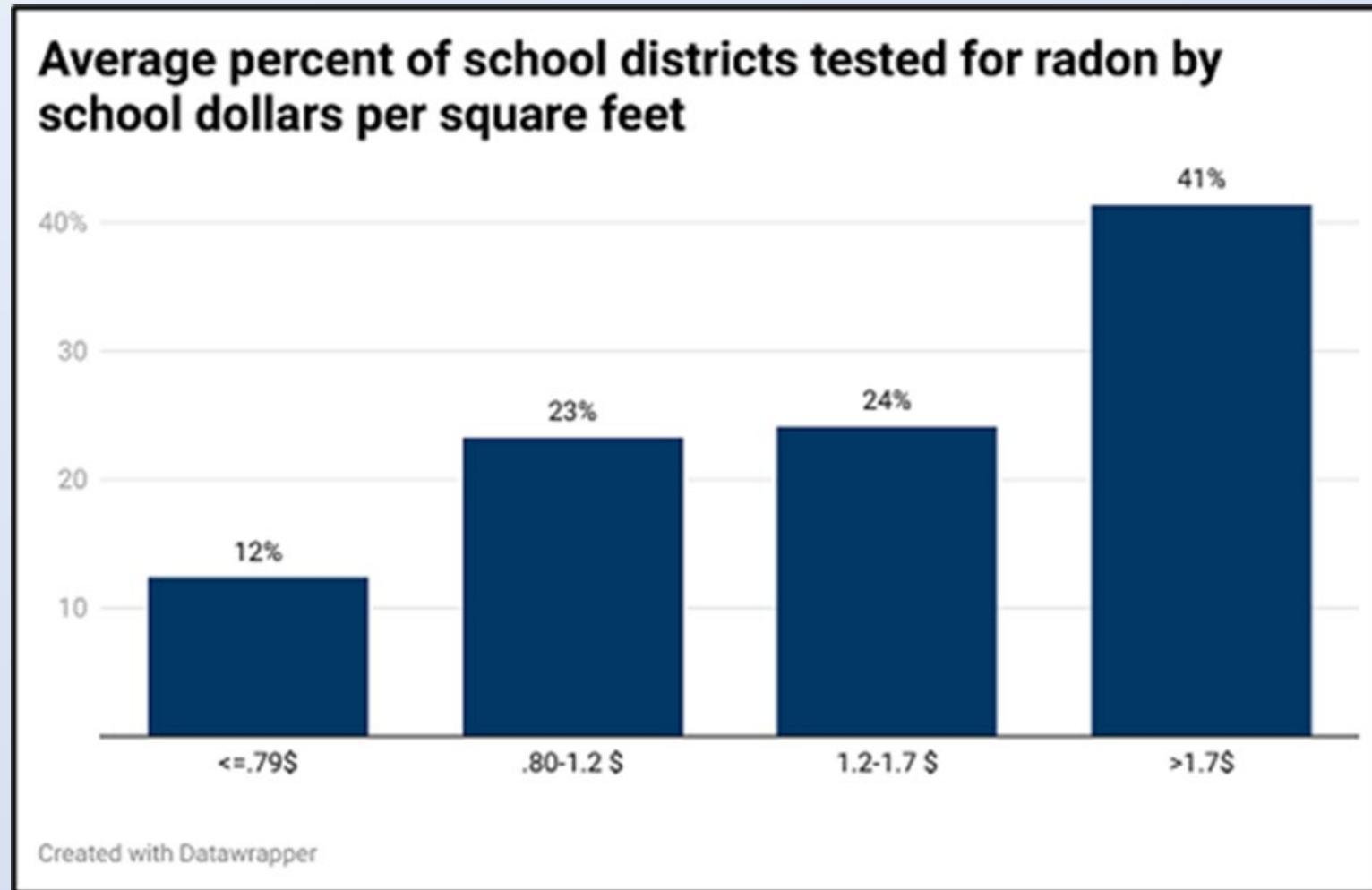
□ No testing    □ 1-22.1%    □ 22.2-33.2%    □ 33.3-52.0%    □ 52.1-76.9%





# Public school districts with less funding were less likely to test for radon

- School districts in the highest funding category had **29%** more schools per district tested for radon than the lowest funding category.



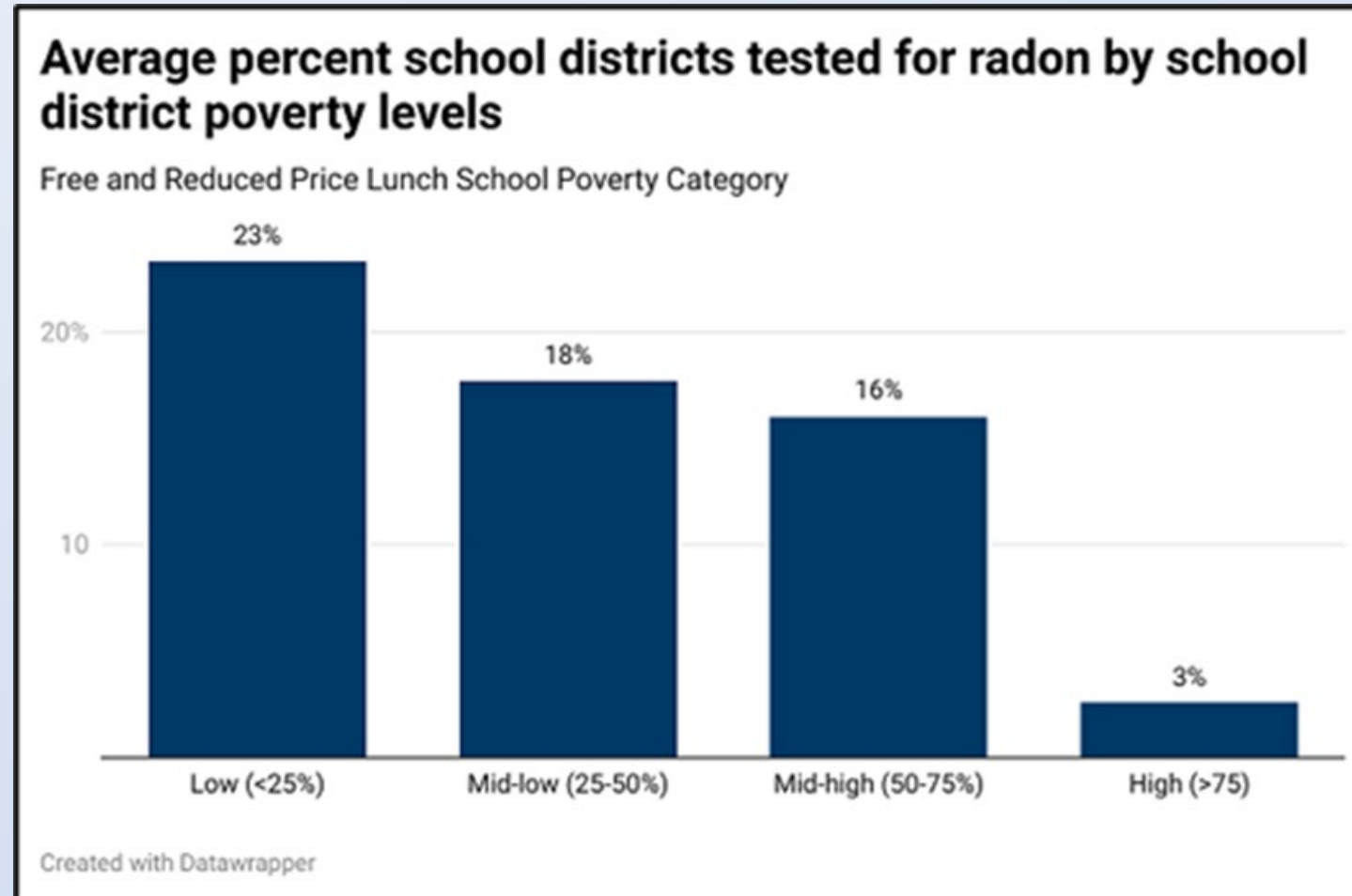
# Free and Reduced Priced Lunch (FRPL)

- Public schools report the percent of students in their school that are eligible for FRPL.
- Used as an estimate for the ***concentration of low-income students*** in the school district.



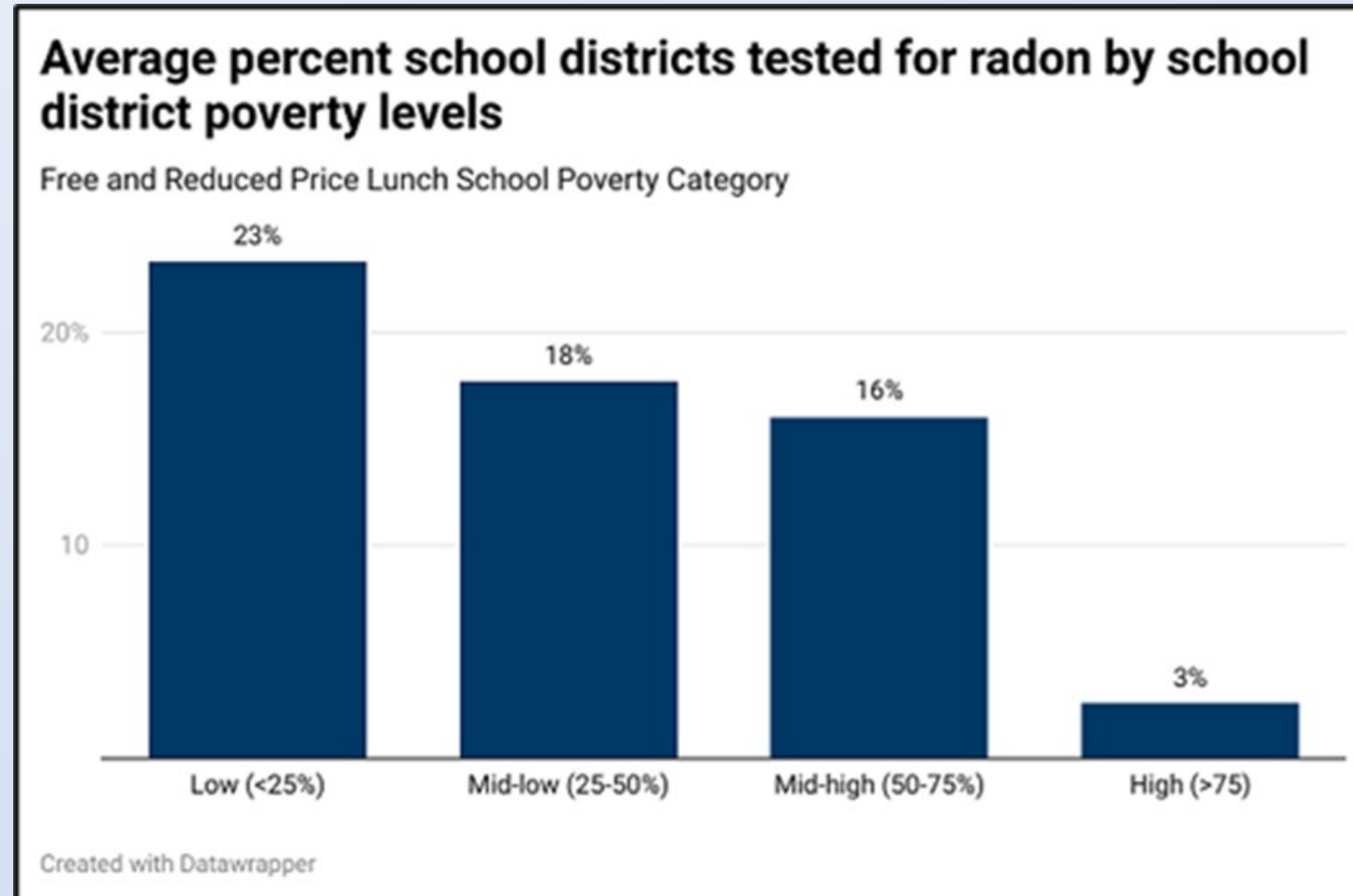
# Public school districts with more low-income students were less likely to test for radon

- School districts with the most students eligible for FRPL tested **20%** fewer schools in the district for radon than school districts with the fewest students eligible for FRPL.



# Public school districts with more low-income students were less likely to test for radon

- Less testing in districts with higher rates of free or reduced price lunch (FRPL) eligibility



# Sharing findings

- Developed data brief
- Two-page handout for school partners meeting
- Presentations
- Press release this January for radon awareness month



**Raccoons  
are  
colorless &  
odorless**



Thank you for your attention!



Marc Katz, pizza guy