



# DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT NO. 2

Alcona County

311 Lake St. P.O. Box 218

Harrisville, MI 48740

Tel: 989-724-6757

Iosco County

420 W. Lake Street

Tawas City, MI 48764

Tel: 989-362-6183

Ogemaw County

630 Progress St.

West Branch, MI 48661

Tel: 989-345-5020

Oscoda County

393 S. Mt. Tom Road

Mio, MI 48647

Tel: 989-826-3970

## INFORMATION RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Date: 1.3.2024

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### **Tasteless and Odorless**

*Health Department giving out free, at-home radon test kits*

When a gas is odorless and tasteless, how do you know if it's reaching dangerous levels: **You test for it.**

January is National Radon Action Month, and District Health Department No. 2 is helping area residents ensure safe radon levels in their homes, schools, and offices by offering free test kits. The campaign is called "Give a Can, Get a Kit." To participate, residents exchange non-perishable food for a free radon test kit at all District Health Department No. 2 offices.

"Testing for radon should be performed on all newly acquired properties and once every two years after that," said Cori Upper, DHD2 Environmental Health Director. "DHD2 provided radon tests kits in 2023 for \$5.00 but they will be free this January 2024 with the donation of a non-perishable food item."

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas. You cannot see, smell or taste radon gas and there are no short-term affects that warn you of exposure.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, behind smoking, resulting in an estimated 21,000 deaths annually, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Radon exposure is highly preventable and can be mitigated at a relatively low cost to homeowners.

To help residents learn more about radon levels in their county, Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has created a [one stop website](#). The site has a search-by-county function where residents can learn about average radon levels, contact information for the local health department and state radon officer, and access more educational resources on radon.

### **Measuring Levels**

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter, with a symbol of pCi/l. One pCi/l means that in 1 liter of air, there will be 2.2 radioactive breakdowns each minute. The average national indoor radon level is 1.3 pCi/L. Our jurisdiction's average:

- Alcona: 2.3 pCi/L
- Iosco: 1.2 pCi/L
- Ogemaw: 2.3 pCi/L



Proud Member of the [Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance](#): 7 local health departments advocating for Public Health

- Oscoda: 2.5 pCi/L

The EPA has established 4 pCi/l as its action level, which is where mitigation is recommended. Testing every two years is recommended as homes settle and slight cracks in the foundation of a home can result in changing radon levels. Elevated radon levels can be reduced by installing radon reduction systems to help reduce radon to acceptable levels.

Please note: it is recommended to follow the “Test Conditions” listed on <https://www.michigan.gov/egle/about/organization/materials-management/indoor-radon/testing-for-radon>.

For additional information about radon, visit the [Environmental Protection Agency’s site](#). For an instructional video on how to use a test kit, click [here](#).

**DHD2 hours of operation for radon test kit pickup:**

Monday-Thursday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM and Friday 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM. Offices in Alcona, Iosco, and Oscoda County will close daily from 12:30 PM to 1:00 PM for lunch. The Ogemaw County office will remain open during this time.

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