



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**HEALTH**  
**DEPARTMENT**  
*of Northwest Michigan*

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**Free radon test kits available at the Health Department January 29 – Feb 2**  
***January is National Radon Action Month***

CHARLEVOIX, Mich. – The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is offering free radon test kits the week of January 29 – February 2 to encourage testing during National Radon Action Month. Free test kits--which include the testing device, postage to send the device to a laboratory, laboratory analysis, and report--are available at Health Department offices in Bellaire, Mancelona, Charlevoix, Petoskey/Harbor Springs, and Gaylord. Be sure to bring your Tax Identification Number with you to receive a kit from the Health Department. Kits are also available from some hardware stores and home improvement centers, but they don't always include postage and analysis, so be sure to read the packaging carefully.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the leading cause among nonsmokers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon results in more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths in the U.S. every year.

"Radon levels can vary significantly from home to home," said Scott Kendzierski, director of environmental health at the Health Department. "You can't smell it, taste it, or see it. The only way to know if your family is at risk for radon exposure is to do the test."

If the test shows high levels of radon, the Health Department will provide consultation for further testing or resources to find a contractor to fix your home.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in almost any kind of soil or rock. It travels through the ground and, when released to the atmosphere, it is quickly diluted. When it enters a building through openings in the foundation floor or walls, it tends to be more concentrated than outdoors. Exposure to radon over time increases a person's risk of contracting lung cancer.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For additional information, call your local Health Department office

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