

From: Tula Karras [Ex. 6]
Sent: 12/7/2017 11:24:37 PM
To: Jones, Enesta [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=65b8e6c6e5ca4a7a9ae85d98a4c8eedb-EJones02]
CC: Press [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=b293283291dc44e0b5d1c36be9281d8a-Press]
Subject: Re: Journalist requesting brief interview on radon for Good Housekeeping magazine

Thank you!

Tula Karras
Writer/Editor

[Ex. 6]

On Dec 7, 2017, at 4:48 PM, Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Tula, please attribute to an EPA spokesperson:

Why should homes with major renovations or changes to the HVAC system be retested? What is it about these undertakings that can release more radon into the home?

Renovations, depending on their type and extent, may affect airflows into, out of, and within the home. Renovations may affect radon levels as well. These changes can potentially affect the amount of radon that is drawn from the surrounding soil into the home.

When you say that 2 short-term devices should be used, do you mean 2 of the same type of test (i.e. 2 charcoal tests) or two different types (i.e. charcoal and something else)?

It is typical to use two short-term devices simultaneously when time is short, such as during a home sale. EPA highly recommends that the test be conducted with two test devices of the same type, brand and model, e.g., two activated charcoal devices.

And am I correct in assuming that alpha track, electret or continuous monitor devices are not used for short-term tests (you only mentioned that in context of long-term tests)?

No, they can be used as short term tests as well. It's useful to keep in mind there are "passive" and "active" test devices.

Passive radon testing devices do not need power to function. These include charcoal canisters, alpha-track detectors, charcoal liquid scintillation devices, and electret ion chamber detectors, some of which are available in hardware, drug, and other retail stores; many devices/tests can also be ordered online, by mail or phone. These devices are exposed to the air in the home for a specified period of time and then sent to a laboratory for analysis. Both short-term and long-term passive devices are relatively inexpensive. Active radon testing devices require power to function. These include continuous radon monitors. They continuously measure and record the amount of radon or its decay products in the air. Many of these devices provide a report of this information which can reveal any unusual or abnormal swings in the radon level during the test period. Such devices are not typically used for do-it-yourself tests. A qualified radon

measurement professional can explain the report produced by a continuous type measurement device.

From: Tula Karras **Ex. 6**
Sent: Wednesday, December 06, 2017 10:25 PM
To: Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov>
Cc: Press <Press@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Journalist requesting brief interview on radon for Good Housekeeping magazine

Hi Enesta,

After reviewing this more carefully, I had one more Q:

When you say that 2 short-term devices should be used, do you mean 2 of the same type of test (i.e. 2 charcoal tests) or two different types (i.e. charcoal and something else)?

And am I correct in assuming that alpha track, electret or continuous monitor devices are not used for short-term tests (you only mentioned that in context of long-term tests)?

Thanks,

Tula Karras
Writer/Editor

Ex. 6

On Dec 6, 2017, at 3:58 PM, Jones, Enesta <Jones.Enesta@epa.gov> wrote:

Hi Tula, I'm sending our responses on behalf of Tricia. Please attribute to an EPA spokesperson.

1. What is the prevalence for radon in U.S. homes?
The national average is that 1 in 15 homes will have a radon level at or above EPA's action level of 4 pCi/l. However, due to the geologic nature of radon some communities will have a higher percentage of homes with elevated levels – possibly exceeding 50%. General all-purpose info is in the Citizen's Guide to Radon - <https://www.epa.gov/radon/consumers-guide-radon-reduction-how-fix-your-home>.
2. Who should test their test and how often? (i.e. everyone should test it every year? only when you first move into a new home?)
Every home should be tested for radon. Homes that undergo major renovations or changes to the HVAC system should be retested.
3. What types of radon tests are most accurate?
Since radon levels can vary, a long-term test (more than 90 days) gives the most accurate reading of a house's radon level. These are usually alpha track, electret or continuous monitor devices. EPA recommends that if short-terms tests are done that

two devices be used; either concurrently or sequentially. The two results are then averaged for the house's level.

4. Are there certain areas of the country or other environmental factors that can raise your risk? (i.e. living near a power plant ,etc.)

Elevated radon levels have been found in homes in every state. Due to geology some areas have more potential for higher radon than others. Regardless of where you live everyone's home should be tested; it's the only way to tell if there's a radon problem. <https://www.epa.gov/radon/find-information-about-local-radon-zones-and-state-contact-information>

5. Is there any way besides testing your home to know if you might have a radon problem?

Testing is the only way to determine a home's radon level. Radon is radioactive, and it's also invisible and odorless. Testing is easy – kits are available online and at larger home stores. Certified professional can be hired as well.

6. Are new homes required to have radon monitors?

EPA is unaware of any local requirements for radon monitors similar to those for carbon monoxide or smoke for new homes. There are state and local building codes that require all new homes be built using radon-resistant construction techniques.

7. What do you do if you have levels that exceed safe limits?

Since radon is radioactive there isn't a 100% safe level. Any exposure to radon poses some health risk. If the home has levels at or above 4 pCi/l, EPA recommends reducing those levels. A radon mitigation usually entails placing a vent pipe through the house to exhaust the radon from beneath the slab. Sometimes a fan is attached to increase the suction and the effectiveness of the system. The Consumer's Guide to Radon Reduction is very informative -- <https://www.epa.gov/radon/consumers-guide-radon-reduction-how-fix-your-home>.

8. How much does it cost to have a radon contractor address a radon problem? If you don't know for sure, is there a ballpark or a range for specific systems? Trying to give readers a sense of how much they might need to spend if they have high levels. Prices will vary from place to place depending on how much work needs to be done (a simple system or an elaborate one) and the cost of labor and materials. Radon mitigation costs about the same as other home repairs. Always work with certified mitigators and get quotes from multiple companies.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tula Karra [mailto:tula.karra@epa.gov] **Ex. 6**
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2017 12:23 PM
To: Lynn, Tricia <lynn.tricia@epa.gov>
Subject: Re: Journalist requesting brief interview on radon for Good Housekeeping magazine

Hi Tricia,

Thank you for getting back to me so quickly. My soft deadline is Tuesday morning (sorry for the last-minute notice). This is a first draft so I can incorporate quotes upon the revise stage. That said, I'd appreciate any efforts on your staff's part to make the earlier deadline.

Here are the Qs:

1. What is the prevalence for radon in U.S. homes?
2. Who should test their test and how often? (i.e. everyone should test it every year? only when you first move into a new home?)
3. What types of radon tests are most accurate?
4. Are there certain areas of the country or other environmental factors that can raise your risk? (i.e. living near a power plant ,etc.)
5. Is there any way besides testing your home to know if you might have a radon problem?
6. Are new homes required to have radon monitors?
7. What do you do if you have levels that exceed safe limits?
8. How much does it cost to have a radon contractor address a radon problem? If you don't know for sure, is there a ballpark or a range for specific systems? Trying to give readers a sense of how much they might need to spend if they have high levels.

Best,

Tula Karras
Writer/Editor

Ex. 6

> On Nov 30, 2017, at 7:20 AM, Lynn, Tricia <lynn.tricia@epa.gov> wrote:

>

> Hi Tula--

>

> Thanks for your inquiry. I'm happy to check into the possibility of a call, though I do need to mention that they're not always available. If not, we can generally respond in writing.

>

> In either case, to start I'll need a list of your specific questions and your hard deadline. Can you please send those at your earliest convenience?

>

> Thanks so much,

>

> Tricia

>

> _____

>

> Tricia Lynn

> Office of Public Affairs

> U.S. EPA

> Office: 202.564.2615

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Tula Karras **Ex. 6**

> Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2017 9:06 PM

> To: Lynn, Tricia <lynn.tricia@epa.gov>

> Subject: Journalist requesting brief interview on radon for Good

> Housekeeping magazine

>
> Hello Tricia,
>
> I'm writing a piece of Good Housekeeping's April issue on indoor air quality and I am addressing radon as a possible source of indoor air pollutants. I'd like to speak with someone at the EPA about the risks of elevated radon levels, how to know if your home is affected, and what to do if it is.
>
> I've reviewed some of the information on the EPA's web site, but I would also like to speak to an expert if possible.
>
> Thank you! Best,
>
> Tula Karras
> Writer/Editor

Ex. 6

>
>