



Map Courtesy of RPII

To have your property tested or for further advice

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*Helping you create a healthy home*

RADON TESTING NATIONWIDE • SUMP ACTIVATION & REMEDIATION

# RADON AWARE GROUP

The one stop shop for all your radon problems from **testing**, **solving** high levels of radon gas to **advice** & **equipment**.



**THE HOMEBUYERS GUIDE TO**

# **RADON**

# FACTS

**Radon** is a Group 1 carcinogen as is cigarette smoke.

**Radon** is a colourless, odourless, tasteless radioactive gas.

**Radon** accounts for over 60% of the total radiation dose received.

**Radon** can cause lung cancer.

**Radon** is present in all buildings.

Accidents on the road account for approximately 300 fatalities annually, while cancer of the cervix kills around 70 women every year in Ireland. In 2003 there were 67 deaths following accidents in the workplace. 17 deaths caused by meningitis. 195 caused by **radon**

## HOMES

To date there has been radon measurements in approximately 30,000 Irish homes of which around 3,700 have radon concentrations above 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> and 200 exceed 1,000 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>.

The highest concentration recorded in Ireland to date is 49,000Bq/m<sup>3</sup>. To date, Ireland would have one of the highest levels in Europe.

In some areas as many as 1 in 5 homes are above the recommended level of 200 bq/m<sup>3</sup>.

## WORKPLACES

Under the 2005 Health & Safety Act all employers must include this in their risk assessment. Failure to do so can result in prosecutions & fines. Recommended **radon** level for a workplaces is 400 bq/m<sup>3</sup>

It has been estimated by The Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) that 10-15% of approximately 1,500 lung cancer deaths in Ireland each year can be linked to radon. This equates to almost 2000 lung cancer deaths in the past decade. This is confirmed by the recent European study of radon exposure in the home.

It is also now accepted that the radon barrier installed in new buildings may not be enough to protect the occupants.

## SO WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT IT

The Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII) has said all homes being placed for sale on the market should be tested for radon gas and where necessary, remediation should be included in the mortgage approval process.

Almost 90,000 homes throughout Ireland still have radon concentrations above the recommended levels, The Institute has made a submission to the Law Reform Commission on the issue and has written to all the major banks, building societies and insurance companies urging them to protect the interests of their clients in reducing the risks from radon in the home.

Any physically dangerous defects in the structure of a home are checked by the conveyancing process and must be remedied before mortgage approval is given. The same should apply to radon. Remediation is relatively straightforward and inexpensive - **no one should have to live with the danger.**



## WHY SHOULD THIS CONCERN A HOMEBUYER/SELLER

**Apart from protecting your family's health, in the future it is likely to become law that all homes for sale be tested.**

There is strong evidence to suggest that very significant numbers of householders have potential radon problems and thus leaving themselves and their families exposed to the health risks. People may be worried about the impact on the value of their homes, but once the problem has been identified and remediation is carried out, there is no residual danger.

### What if I am a seller

You should have your property tested as this can speed up negotiations. It is standard practice for your surveyor & solicitor to inform buyers about radon issues.

### What can be done if you have concerns the house you are buying is in a high radon area?

It is Recommended in other jurisdictions that one of the solicitors retains a sum from the sale proceeds pending the result of a radon test by the new occupier. If this result is below the Action Level, the money is returned to the vendor, normally within six months. If this test result exceeds the Action Level, the money is used to pay for mitigation work. Once this work has been completed and shown to be effective by a further test, nine months after the first test result, any surplus is returned to the vendor. For most properties a sum of around €3000 is adequate as mitigation work normally costs between €500 and €3000 the most effective method of mitigation should always be used.

Although this has not as yet been formally adopted in the Irish jurisdiction it would seem the most logical.

### Will the test delay the sale of the property

No, the test is carried out after the sale.