



# Genesee County Health Department

Mark Valacak, M.P.H., Health Officer  
Gary K. Johnson, M.D., M.P.H., Medical Director

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 8, 2015

End Date: January 31, 2015

Contact Person: James Henry  
Environmental Health Supervisor

Phone: (810) 257-3603

RE: **January is Radon Action Month - Free Kits Available**

The Genesee County Health Department (GCHD) encourages area residents to check the radon gas levels in their homes during National Radon Action Month. The GCHD is offering **free radon test kits** in observance of this event. The U.S. Surgeon General has issued a national health advisory on the risks of breathing radon gas in our homes. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. and is the leading cause among nonsmokers. Governor Rick Snyder has proclaimed January 2015 as Radon Action Month in Michigan.

Mark Valacak, MPH, Genesee County Health Officer, explains “Radon is an invisible, odorless and tasteless gas that seeps into homes from surrounding soil and rock. It has no immediate health symptoms, so residents are encouraged to get a free kit and test during the next few weeks.”

Outdoors, radon is diluted by the atmosphere. When radon gas becomes trapped in homes, it can be harmful at elevated levels. During cold weather, we spend more time indoors with windows closed, potentially breathing unhealthy levels of radon. Exposure over time can increase one’s risk of contracting lung cancer.

Radon levels vary from house to house and by geographic locations. Elevated levels of radon have been detected in nearly every township in Genesee County. The only way to know if you have radon gas in your home is to test for it. Test kits are available for \$6.00 each, year round, from the health department. During January, however, the kits are available at no charge. Some hardware and home improvement stores sell the do-it-yourself radon test kits. Professional testing services are also available, but are most often used for testing as part of a real estate transaction. If elevated levels are found, homeowners should contact a licensed radon mitigation contractor. Radon levels can be reduced with various ventilation techniques by trained professionals.

## Better Life Through Better Health

Floyd J. McCree Courts & Human Services Building ♦ 630 S. Saginaw Street, Ste. 4 ♦ Flint, Michigan 48502-1540

Burton Branch ♦ G-3373 S. Saginaw Street ♦ Burton, Michigan 48529

Main Phone 810-257-3612 ♦ Visit us at: [www.gchd.us](http://www.gchd.us)

County residents are urged to pick up a free radon test kit from the Genesee County Health Department during normal business hours through the month of January. Environmental Health Services is located in the health department on the second floor of the McCree South Human Services building at 630 S. Saginaw Street, downtown Flint. The Environmental Health desk is closed between the hours of noon and 1:30 pm, Monday through Friday and closed on major holidays.

Citizens interested in finding out more about radon can contact the Genesee County Health Department at (810) 257-3603, or log on to [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3310\\_4105\\_4196---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3310_4105_4196---,00.html) or [www.gchd.us](http://www.gchd.us) .

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