

# January is Radon Awareness Month



Erie County  
Department of  
Health



Public Health  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

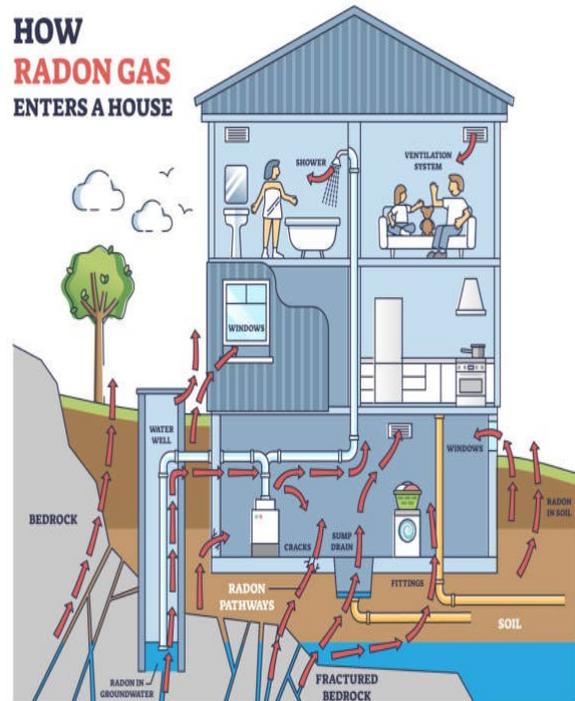
## Smoking, Radon and Lung Cancer

While smoking accounts for about 85% of all lung cancers, the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** reports that 10–20% of lung cancers in the United States, each year, occur in people who smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime or never smoked at all.

The two biggest risks factors for developing lung cancer **other than smoking** are exposure to **secondhand smoke** and **radon**.

- **Secondhand smoke** contributes to about 7,300 lung cancer deaths per year.
- **Radon** contributes to about 2,900 lung cancer deaths in people who never smoked.
- **Radon** exposure is an additional factor in over 21,000 lung cancer deaths of high-risk smokers.
- **A smoker who is exposed to radon** is at much higher risk of lung cancer than a smoker who is not exposed to radon.

Radon is a radioactive gas that has no color, smell, or taste. It is produced in the ground from uranium and diffuses into the atmosphere. High concentrations of radon may build up in enclosed spaces such as buildings and long-term exposure can increase the risk of lung cancer.



The U.S. office of the Surgeon General recommends that all houses be **tested for radon**. Radon test kits are available from the NYS Department of Health for \$12.25 each. Cost includes testing device, laboratory analysis and postage. Email [radon@health.ny.gov](mailto:radon@health.ny.gov) to request an order form. Be sure to follow all test instructions.

[Map of Erie County's Radon Concentrations](#)

[Erie County Healthy Neighborhoods](#)

[Protect Your Family From Radon: A Guide for New York State Residents \(ny.gov\)](#)

[NYS Radon Information](#)

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