

# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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## **Radon invades the home when temps outside most frigid: Free tests kits vital to protect your family from cancer-causing, odorless gas**

The last week or more has brought frigid temperatures to the Panhandle and most folks are happiest snug in their homes, inside the most weather tight envelope the homeowner can create. The toasty seal we put on our homes however, is also the best way to keep radon in our homes; so experts advise checking your home for the odorless, but deadly, gas during January with a free test kit from Panhandle Public Health District.

“One in every two homes in Nebraska has a radon problem and yours could be one of them,” said Mark Versch, environmental health analyst from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Versch will be the featured speaker at three programs in the Panhandle in January on radon. *[Note to editor: public presentation details listed below.]*

“Radon is a radioactive gas that cannot be seen, smelled or tasted and is found around the country,” Versch continued. “It can enter your house through soil, dirt floors in crawl spaces and cracks in foundations, floors and walls. Once inside, radon gas can sometimes be trapped inside the house.”

PPHD Environmental Health Coordinator Tabi Prochazka said all houses have some radon, but houses next to each other can have very different radon levels, so the only way to measure your particular risk is to test your own house. The free radon kits are available by calling PPHD at 308-487-3600 or toll free at 866-701-7173.

“Testing your home is very important,” Prochazka added. “There are two types of tests: short-term tests take three to seven days, while long-term tests take around 90 days and provide results that are slightly more accurate.”

“Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer,” she concluded. “Second only to tobacco smoke.”

For additional information about radon, visit [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org). The purpose of the Panhandle Public Health District is to educate the region it serves about the prevention of epidemics, spread of contagious diseases, injury, illness and disability. The district is charged with promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors. They promote the quality and accessibility of health services and protection against environmental hazards. Through education, protection and promotion of these issues, the Panhandle Public Health District believes the quality of life of the residents they serve can be greatly improved.

### **Area invited to attend free training program on radon**

- Tuesday, January 19 from 3-7 p.m. at the Chadron Housing Info Fair, Dawes County 4-H building, Dawes County Fairgrounds, Chadron
- Wednesday, January 20 at 5:30 p.m. at Rooms 315 and 316, Western Nebraska Community College Sidney Campus, 371 College Drive
- Thursday, January 21 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Harms Advanced Technology Center, WNCC Scottsbluff Campus, 2620 College Park