

Citizens Urged to “Heed the Warning” Radon Causes Lung Cancer: You Should Test Your Home

Florence, AL January 9, 2007 – The Alabama Cooperative Extension System is working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in a nationwide campaign to educate Americans about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to protect their homes and families. In our community, Pat Smith, Extension Agent for Radon Education with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System will be conducting a ‘Lunch and Learn’ Seminar at Red Bay Hospital on Friday, January 26 from 11:00 am until noon . In addition, Radio Public Service Announcements, Radon Education displays at local libraries and hospital waiting rooms, and Proclamations from local government officials will help increase public awareness during National Radon Action Month in January.

Radon is present at elevated levels in almost 17% of Franklin County homes. Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, tasteless gas that is dispersed in outdoor air, but which can reach harmful levels when trapped in buildings. Scientists have long been concerned about the health risk of radon, but never before has there been such overwhelming proof that exposure to elevated levels of radon causes lung cancer in humans.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimated that radon is responsible for more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths per year. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. “However,” says Smith, “because you can’t see or smell radon, people tend to downplay the health effects and ignore the possibility that there might be a silent killer in their homes.”

Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits can be purchased for \$5.00 at the Lauderdale County Extension System Office located at 802 Veterans Drive in Florence.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System urges Shoals area residents to take action during this year's National Radon Action Month by testing their homes for radon. Radon poses a serious threat to our community's health but here is a straightforward solution. For more information on radon, radon testing and mitigation, and radon-resistant new construction, call Pat Smith at the Lauderdale County Extension System at 256-766-6223 or visit our Web site at www.aces.edu/radon, or visit EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/radon.

News Release

For Immediate Release

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