

wellcare™ information for you about **Radon**

What is RADON?

You may be familiar with concerns about radon in the air in your home. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that has no color, odor or taste. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. Soil under the home releases radon, which escapes to the air, where it can dissolve in water and accumulate in your well.

High levels of radon are commonly detected in certain kinds of bedrock, such as granite and dark shale. The EPA reports that radon levels in ground water are highest in New England, the Appalachian Mountains, the Rocky Mountains, California, Texas and the upper Midwest states. Find out what kind of rock your home is built upon.

What are the health effects of Radon?

Radon can be inhaled when it is released from water while showering, washing dishes or cooking. It also can be ingested directly through drinking water. Inhaled radon is of greatest concern as it increases the risk of lung cancer. Drinking water contaminated by radon raises the risk of stomach cancer.

How do I test for Radon?

The EPA and the U.S. Surgeon General recommend that homes first be tested for radon in indoor air. Radon is measured in "picocuries" per liter (abbreviated "pCi/L"). If the test on air results in a reading of 4 pCi/L or higher, the EPA recommends that radon also be tested in drinking water.

A state laboratory certification office or state radon office can direct you to laboratories equipped to test drinking water for radon. If the test on water results in a reading above 2,000 pCi/L, you should take action to remove the radon.

What is the treatment for Radon in drinking water?

Fortunately, radon can be eliminated through one of two types of water treatment. Aeration devices spray water or mix it with air, and then vent the air from the water. GAC (granular activated carbon) filters use activated carbon to remove the gas. GAC filters tend to cost less than aeration devices. However, radioactivity collects on the GAC filter, which may cause a handling hazard and require special disposal methods.

For more information about Radon

Call the Radon Hotline, 800-SOS-RADON or visit the EPA's website: www.epa.gov/iaq/radon for contact information for your state radon office.

For more information on your ground water

Your local well contractor, health department, cooperative extension service and state environmental or natural resources department can provide more information about ground water in your area. Check the telephone directory or search the web under “water wells” or “government agencies.”

For more information about wells and other wellcare™ publications

wellcare™ is a program of the **Water Systems Council (WSC)**. WSC is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promote the wider use of wells as modern and affordable safe drinking water systems and to protect ground water resources nationwide.



Contact us at 888-395-1033 or visit www.watersystemscouncil.org

Other wellcare™ publications:

A Consumer's Guide to Water Wells

A Consumer's Guide to Well Testing & Disinfection

wellcare™ Info Sheet: Home Drinking Water Treatment Devices

wellcare™ Info Sheet: Water Quality – arsenic, bacteria, chromium, iron, MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether), nitrate, radon, radium, sulfur and TCE (trichloroethylene)

Other organizations you may want to contact:

Water Quality Association	630-505-0160	www.wqa.org
The Ground Water Foundation	800-858-4844	www.groundwater.org
American Ground Water Trust	603-228-5444	www.agwt.org
National Ground Water Association	800-551-7379	www.ngwa.org

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