

RADON IN WISCONSIN

Amanda Koch, MPH and Kim Dawson, MPH
Indoor Radon Program
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Wisconsin Radon Program Structure

EPA State and Tribal Indoor
Radon Grant (SIRG) funded
with GPR match



Wisconsin Radon Program Structure

EPA State and Tribal Indoor Radon Grant (SIRG) funded with GPR match

2 full-time DHS staff



AMANDA KOCH, MPH
PROGRAM MANAGER



KIM DAWSON, MPH
OUTREACH SPECIALIST

DHS Radon Program Major Activities

Manage EPA SIRG grant monies and lead implementation of required activities (education, outreach, training).

Educate diverse audiences about radon and health and promote radon testing and mitigation among them.

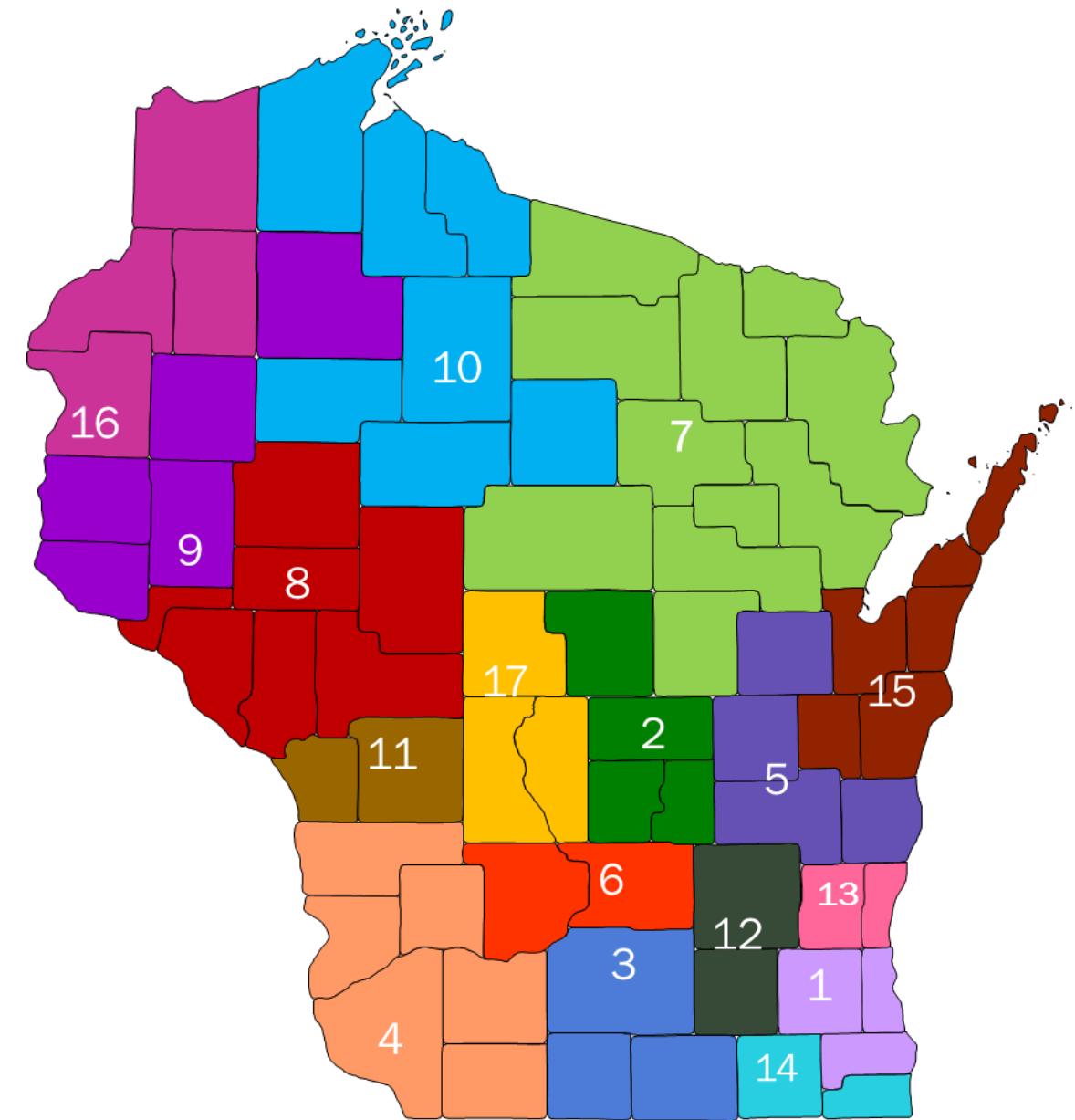
Serve as state radon SME and team leader for 17 funded Radon Information Centers (RICs).

Wisconsin Radon Program Structure

EPA State and Tribal Indoor Radon Grant (SIRG) funded with GPR match

2 full-time DHS staff

17 regional Radon Information Centers (RICs)



RICs: By the Numbers

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Created or revised **70** radon-related resources.

RICs: By the Numbers

During October 2024–September 2025, RICs:

Received and responded to **1,798** phone calls and emails about radon.

Distributed **9,050** short- and long-term test kits.

Created or revised **70** radon-related resources.

Led or participated in **42** events to educate about radon.

RICs: By the Numbers

Test kit return rates hover near 80%.

	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Short-term kits SOLD/DISTRIBUTED	7,569	7,209	8,672
Short-term kits RETURNED	6,017	5,580	6,639
Percentage of kits RETURNED	79.5%	77.4%	76.5%

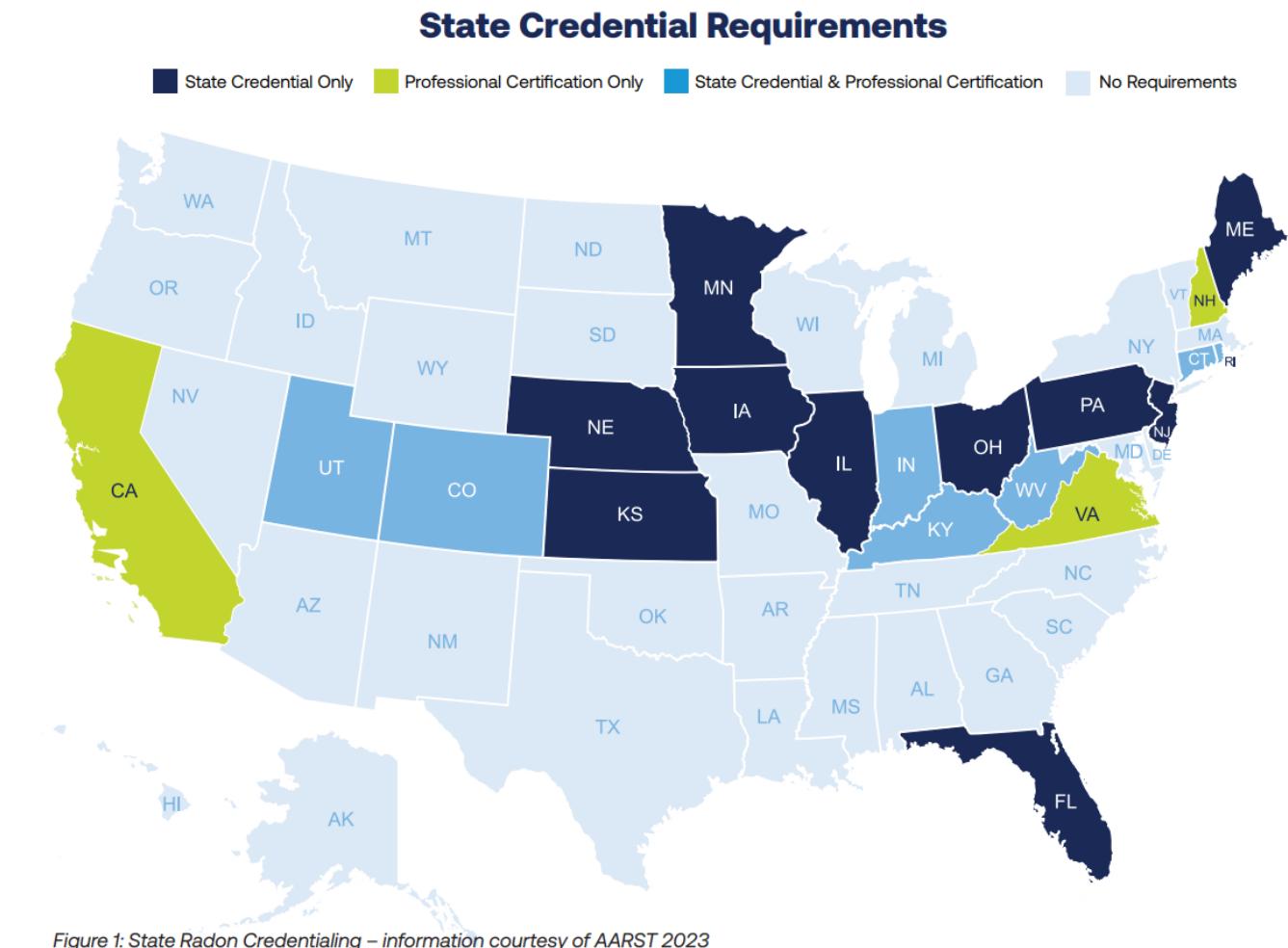
Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

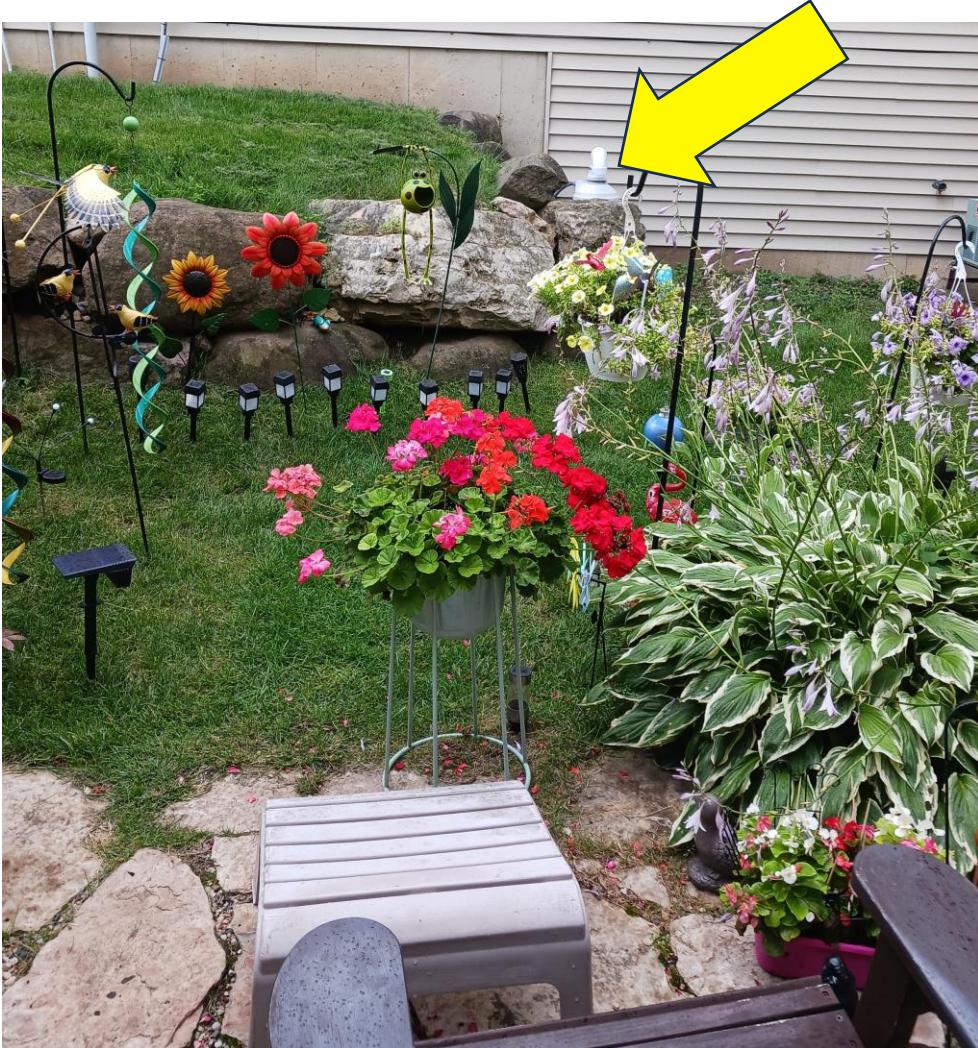
	Required state license for radon professionals
Wisconsin	

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

	Required state license for radon professionals
Wisconsin	



Case Study: Install Job in Dane County



Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

	Required state license for radon professionals	Radon-specific disclosure and warning at real estate point of sale
Wisconsin		

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

	Required state license for radon professionals	Radon-specific disclosure and warning at real estate point of sale
Wisconsin	✗	✗

Grouped with other environmental health and safety concerns in Wisconsin's Real Estate Condition Report

C. ENVIRONMENTAL

C1. Are you aware of the presence of unsafe levels of mold?

C2. Are you aware of a defect caused by unsafe concentrations of, or unsafe conditions relating to, radon, radium in water supplies, high voltage electric (100 KV or greater) or steel natural gas transmission lines located on but not directly serving the property, lead in paint, lead in soil, or other potentially hazardous or toxic substances on the property? NOTE: Specific

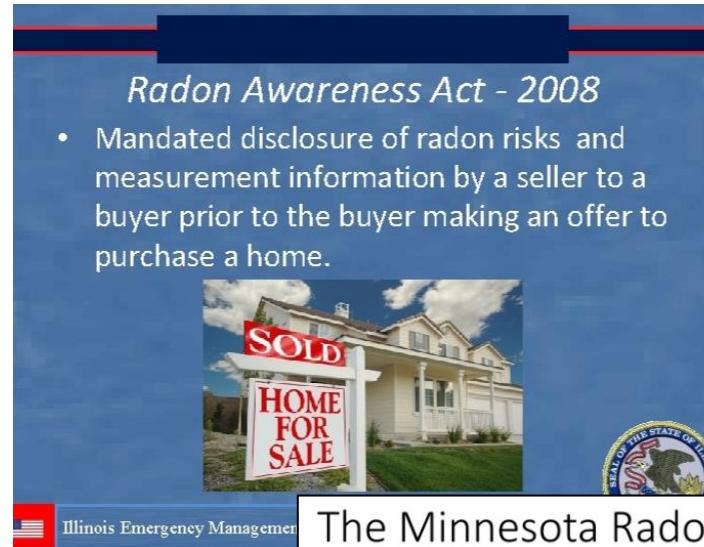
YES
NO
N/A

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

	Required state license for radon professionals	Radon-specific disclosure and warning at real estate point of sale
Wisconsin		

Radon Awareness Act - 2008

- Mandated disclosure of radon risks and measurement information by a seller to a buyer prior to the buyer making an offer to purchase a home.



The Minnesota Radon Awareness Act

- Passed in 2013 Legislative Session, Effective January 1, 2014.
- Before signing a purchase agreement to sell or transfer residential real property, the seller shall disclose in writing to the buyer any knowledge the seller has of radon concentrations in the dwelling. The disclosure shall include:
 - whether a radon test or tests have occurred on the property;
 - the most current records and reports pertaining to radon concentrations within the dwelling;
 - a description of any radon concentrations, mitigation, or remediation;
 - information regarding the radon mitigation system, including system description and documentation, if such system has been installed in the dwelling; and
 - a radon warning statement developed by MDH
 - a copy of the Minnesota Department of Health publication entitled "Radon in Real Estate Transactions."

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

	Required state license for radon professionals	Radon-specific disclosure and warning at real estate point of sale	Radon resistant new construction required in new build homes statewide
Wisconsin			

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Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

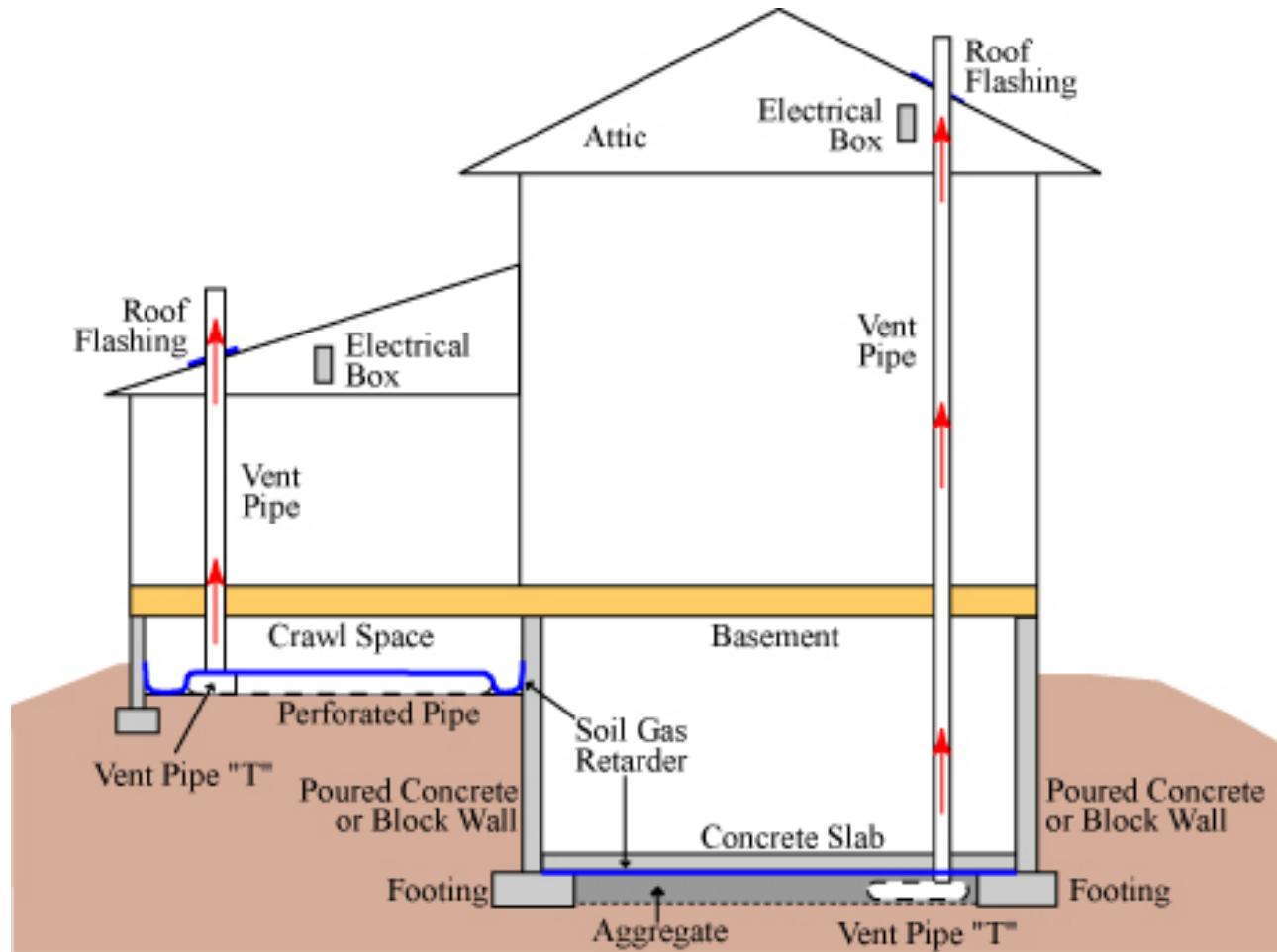


Image courtesy of indoor-air-health-advisor.com

Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

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Wisconsin				

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Current Radon Policies in Wisconsin

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Wisconsin					 DCF Rule 250.06

Radon in Child Care Rule

Went into effect March 1, 2023

Testing requirements for family and group centers

Notification and mitigation required if radon exceeds 4 pCi/L in the lowest level used by children at least 7 hours per week



DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Under Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) administrative code, licensed child care centers are required to:

DCF 250 (Family
child care)

DCF 251 (Group
child care)

DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Under Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) administrative code, licensed child care centers are required to:

- Test for radon within 6 months prior to providing care for children.

DCF 250 (Family child care)

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Under Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) administrative code, licensed child care centers are required to:

- Test for radon within 6 months prior to providing care for children.
- Test in the lowest level used by children at least 7 hours per week.
- Notify parents/guardians and mitigate within 12 months if radon test results exceed 4 pCi/L.

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DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Under Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) administrative code, licensed child care centers are required to:

- Test for radon within 6 months prior to providing care for children.
- Test in the lowest level used by children at least 7 hours per week.
- Notify parents/guardians and mitigate within 12 months if radon test results exceed 4 pCi/L.
- Test again every two years for family centers or every 5 years for group centers.

DCF 250 (Family child care)

DCF 251 (Group child care)

DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Where the rule falls short:

DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Where the rule falls short:

- Using a certified contractor or following ANSI/AARST standards for testing and/or mitigation is not required.

DCF Administrative Code (3/1/2023)

Where the rule falls short:

- Using a certified contractor or following ANSI/AARST standards for testing and/or mitigation is not required.
- Only one radon test is required to be deployed, regardless of building size and number of ground contact rooms.

Resources for Child Care Providers

Resources for Child Care Providers

Radon Testing for child care providers

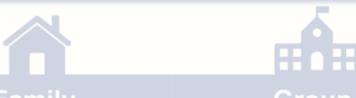
Radon is a radioactive gas that has no smell, color, or taste. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who don't smoke. Radon-related lung cancer can be prevented if we reduce the amount of radon in buildings where people live, work, and attend school and child care. **All licensed family and group child care centers in Wisconsin are required to test for radon.** Testing for radon in your center may look different depending on whether your center is a family or group care center. This frequently asked questions (FAQs) guide will help you know what to expect.

FAQ	Family Care Centers	Group Care Centers
Who should test my center for radon?	You can test your center yourself using a short-term radon test kit. You can purchase a test kit from a local hardware store or your regional Radon Information Center . While not required, you may also hire a certified radon measurement contractor to understand the true risk of radon in your building.	The Department of Children and Families (DCF) requires one short-term radon test at a minimum. However, testing a non-residential building is complex. It is best practice to use a certified radon measurement contractor to understand the true risk of radon in your building.
What is the cost of testing for radon?	A short-term test kit costs \$10-\$30 per test. Check for discounted short-term radon test kits at your regional Radon Information Center . A certified radon measurement contractor will charge between \$125 and \$150 for a residential building. The child care center is responsible for these costs.	A certified radon measurement contractor will charge from \$500 to \$1500 to test a non-residential building. The cost of testing varies by size of the facility. The child care center is responsible for these costs. To find a certified radon measurement professional serving your county, visit www.lowradon.org .
How should I test for radon in my building?	Test for at least 48 hours in the lowest level of the center that is used by children in care for at least seven hours per week. The winter months are the best time to test. Keep windows and doors closed during testing. Refer to test kit instructions or www.lowradon.org for more information on how to test.	Test for at least 48 hours in the lowest level of the center that is used by children in care for at least seven hours per week. In commercial buildings, you'll need to test more places, including every classroom in contact with the ground. Using a certified radon measurement contractor is recommended.
When do I need to test for radon?	New providers must test for radon within six months of providing care for children. Within five days of receiving results, you must submit a copy to your licensing specialist or DCF regional office .	New providers must test for radon within six months of providing care for children. Within five days of receiving results, you must submit a copy to your licensing specialist or DCF regional office .
	Test your center every two years after the initial test date, no matter what the result is.	Test your center every five years after the initial test date, no matter what the result is.

Resources for Child Care Providers

Radon Testing for child care providers

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What is the cost of testing for radon?

A short-term test kit costs \$10–\$30 per test. Check for discounted short-term radon test kits at your **regional Radon Information Center**. A certified radon measurement contractor will charge between \$125 and \$150 for a residential building. The child care center is responsible for these costs.

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Test your center **every two years** after the initial test date, no matter what the result is.



Radon Mitigation for child care providers

Radon is a radioactive gas that has no smell, color, or taste. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who don't smoke. All licensed family and group child care centers in Wisconsin are required to test for radon and **mitigate (reduce)** it if levels are found above 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L).

Why is radon mitigation important?

When **radon** enters a building, it can contaminate the indoor air. If radon is breathed in over long periods of time, it can cause lung cancer. Radon-related lung cancer can be prevented if we reduce the amount of radon in buildings where people live, work, and attend school and child care. A **radon mitigation system** prevents radon from entering a building by moving it from the soil under the building to the outside air. The radon then mixes with air and is no longer harmful.



What should I do if the radon levels in my center are too high (above 4 pCi/L)?

1. Within 12 months of testing, hire a **certified radon mitigation contractor** to install a radon mitigation system. A list of nationally certified radon mitigation professionals can be found at www.lowradon.org.
2. Notify the parents and guardians of children in care. You can use the included **notification letter template**.
3. After the mitigation system is installed, **test the building again**. Submit updated test results to your child care licensing specialist or Department of Children and Families (DCF) **regional office** within 12 months of your initial test.
4. Test and submit results **every two years** for family centers or **every five years** for group centers no matter what the result is.

Is funding available to help centers pay for radon testing and mitigation?

Child care centers can use the DCF Child Care Counts Payment Program to help pay for radon testing and mitigation. Email DCFDECECOVID19CCPayments@wisconsin.gov for questions about this program.

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Radon Notification letter for parents and guardians

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Our center would like to update you on our efforts to reduce radon levels in our facility. **Radon** is a radioactive gas that has no smell, color, or taste. It comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who don't smoke. Lung cancer typically develops later in life, so preventing high levels of radon where people live, work, and attend school and child care is important.

Wisconsin law requires routine radon testing and mitigation (if needed) for licensed child care centers. We completed our test on _____ and the level of radon in our facility was _____ picocuries per liter (pCi/L). That's higher than the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended action level of 4 pCi/L. To comply with state regulations and prevent long-term exposure to radon for kids and staff in our facility, we will install a radon mitigation system. This system will remove radon from the ground below the facility before it has a chance to contaminate the air inside. The installation will be completed on _____.

Protecting the health and well-being of the children in our care is our top priority. Our center is committed to keeping you informed as we take these radon safety measures. Please reach out anytime with questions.

Sincerely,



To learn more about radon, scan the QR code or visit www.lowradon.org. For health-related questions or to test your own home for radon, contact your regional Radon Information Center or call 888-LOW-RADON (888-569-7236).



Child Care Rule: Measurable Impact

Child Care Rule: Measurable Impact

From March 2023 to October 2025,
80 child care centers across Wisconsin have
mitigated high radon, **protecting at least**
2,060 children and their caretakers from
exposure to high radon levels.

How policies compare to neighboring states

	Required state license for radon professionals	Radon-specific disclosure and warning at real estate point of sale	Radon resistant new construction required in new build homes statewide	Radon testing required in public schools	Radon testing required in child care facilities
Wisconsin	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓ DCF Rule 250.06
Illinois	✓ 420 ILCS 44	✓ 420 ILCS 46	✓ 420 ILCS 52/15	✗	✓ 225 ILCS 10/5.8
Indiana	✓ 410 IAC 5.1-1-2	✗	✗	✗	✗
Iowa	✓ 641 IAC Chapter 43 and 44	✗	✗	✓ Iowa Code 280 Uniform School Requirements, 280.32	✓ IAC Chapter 441-109.11(b)
Michigan	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓ Mich. Admin. Code R 400.1934
Minnesota	✓ Minnesota 144.4961	✓ Minnesota 144.496	✓ Minnesota 326B.106 Subd. 6	✗	✗
Ohio	✓ Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3723	✗	✗	✗	✗

Issue Brief 

Radon in Wisconsin: Testing, Mitigation, and the Link to Lung Cancer

Alison Antoine, MPH, CHES,¹ Kim Dawson, MPH,² Amanda Koch, MPH,²
Katie Lepak, MS,¹ and Olivia Steidi, MPH¹

¹Wisconsin Cancer Collaborative and ²Wisconsin Department of Health Services Radon Program

Introduction
Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water.¹ During this process, the soil beneath and around a home or other building can be the source for radon intrusion into the indoor air, mainly via entry through cracks and spaces in the basement and foundation.² As uranium is naturally broken down, radon can also be found in groundwater, although the risk of exposure via groundwater in Wisconsin is generally much less than radon gas in indoor air. As a natural component of the Earth's crust and atmosphere, radon is found all over Wisconsin and the world.

Key Takeaways

- Radon exposure is the leading cause of lung cancer among people who have never smoked and the second leading cause for people who have a history of smoking.
- There are opportunities to support improved radon testing, mitigation, and quality data collection to reduce exposure and decrease lung cancer risk.
- While there are radon protections in early child care settings, there is an opportunity for continued protection for students in K-12 schools to ensure that all students have limited radon exposure in their learning environments.

Radon's Link to Lung Cancer
As radon decays, it breaks down into radioactive particles that can be inhaled. Once these particles enter your lungs, they can further damage the DNA in lung epithelial cells. Prolonged exposure to these DNA-damaging particles may lead to lung cancer. The association between radon exposure and lung cancer has been demonstrated throughout the literature in numerous cohort studies of miners over many decades, dating back to the 1960s.²



Radon is a naturally occurring gas.



It can enter your home through the soil and enter air quality.



When inhaled, the radioactive particles can damage DNA and cause lung cancer.



The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test.

Test. Fix. Save a life. Learn more at www.epa.gov/radon.

EPA Radon Infographic (EPA, 2021)

NEW! Wisconsin Cancer Collaborative's Radon Issue Brief

CRCPD CDRM Advisory

CRCPD CDRM Advisory

The Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Inc. (CRCPD) has issued an advisory about consumer digital radon monitors (CDRMs).

Key Takeaways:

- CDRMs are **NOT** for making radon mitigation decisions.
- Follow up any high results on CDRMs with an **approved** test kit/device.

Advisory: Radon Testing with Consumer Digital Radon Monitors

Any home can have dangerous levels of **radon gas**. It is the number one cause of lung cancer for people who never smoked and the second leading cause of lung cancer overall. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends all homes be tested for radon and provides information on how it may impact your health: [Health Risk of Radon | US EPA](#)

The EPA recommends either hiring a certified/licensed radon professional or using a test kit to measure radon in your home.

To locate a professional in your state, visit: [How can you find a qualified radon service provider in your area? | US EPA](#)

To test for radon yourself, there are two types of devices you can use:

1	2
A Radon Test Kit is sent to a laboratory for analysis after the kit has been placed for the minimum amount of time. Test kits need to be approved for use by an independent third-party.	A Consumer Digital Radon Monitor measures radon continuously and is available for purchase online and in retail stores. The accuracy and reliability of these monitors have not been verified by an independent third-party. However, these monitors provide continuous results in real-time so may be beneficial.

To learn more about these kits, how often to test, and how to place them in your home, visit [A Citizen's Guide to Radon: The Guide to Protecting Yourself and Your Family from Radon](#)

To obtain an approved test kit, visit [Purchase a test kit | National Radon Program Services or Radon | American Lung Association](#). Test kits may also be purchased through retail stores.

Note: If you share your monitor with others, reset the monitor and provide the manufacturer's instructions to the next user.

1 the lowest lived-in level of the home OR until the test is complete

visit [EPA's A Citizen's Guide to Radon](#).
y results using an approved testing

2 professional, or
measure radon in your home

ome needs mitigation:
these monitors have not been evaluated
ay be higher or lower than actual radon
r mitigation decisions due to seasonal

on mitigation system is continuing to
accuracy and reliability over time, users

should verify radon levels periodically using an approved method.

► **If you are considering selling your home:**
Due to time constraints and the need for reliable results, CDRMs should never be used in real estate transactions. Some states require, and real estate agents expect, the test for a real estate transaction be performed using an approved method.

Key Messages:

Visit [Health Risk of Radon | US EPA](#) to understand the health risks associated with different radon levels and recommendations on when to mitigate your home.

Consumer Digital Radon Monitors are **NOT** for testing during real estate transactions.

Consumer Digital Radon Monitors are **NOT** for making radon mitigation decisions.

CRCPD
<https://crcpd.org/radon/>
info@crcpd.org

Kim Dawson, MPH

DHS Radon Outreach Specialist

BS, Marquette University
MPH, University of Washington

Previous public health experience:

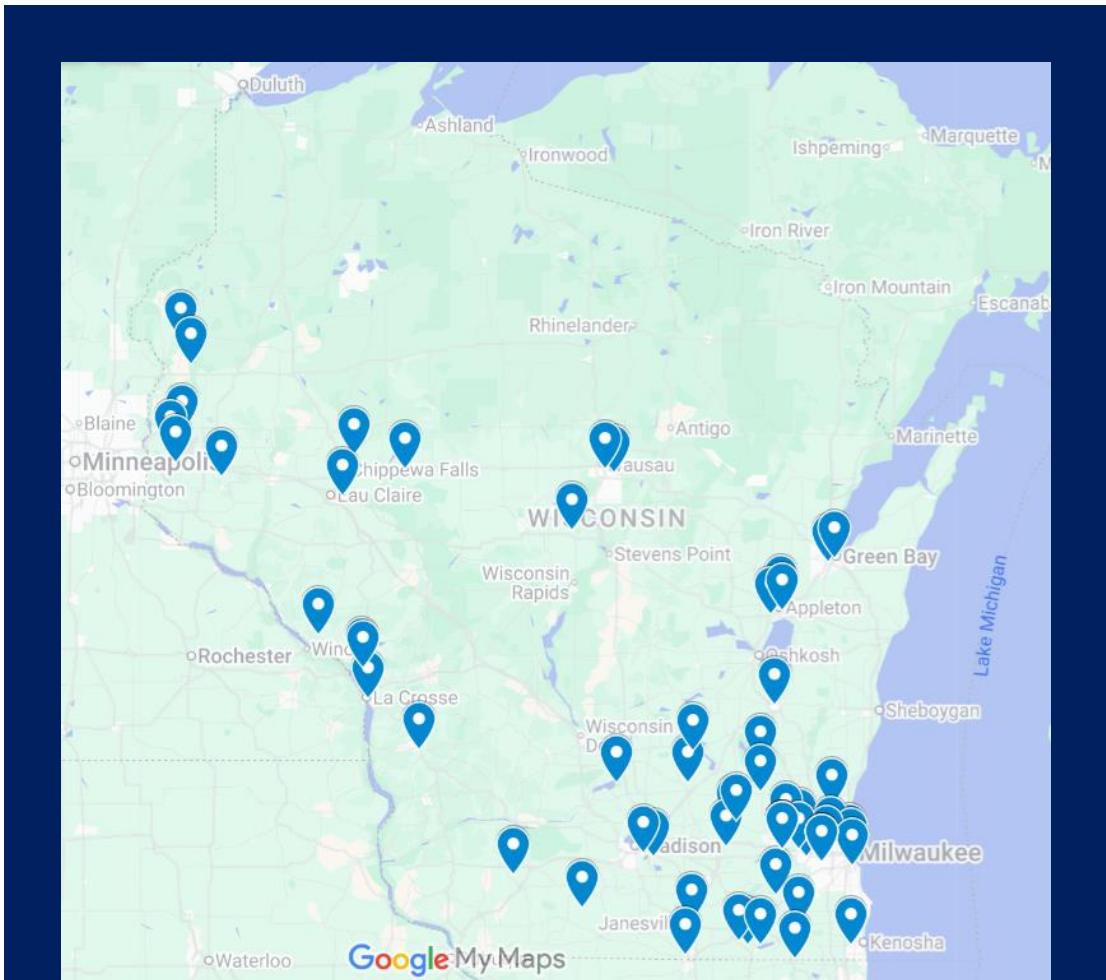
- Environmental health
- COVID response and prevention
- Health communications and designing for behavior change



Radon mitigation service deserts

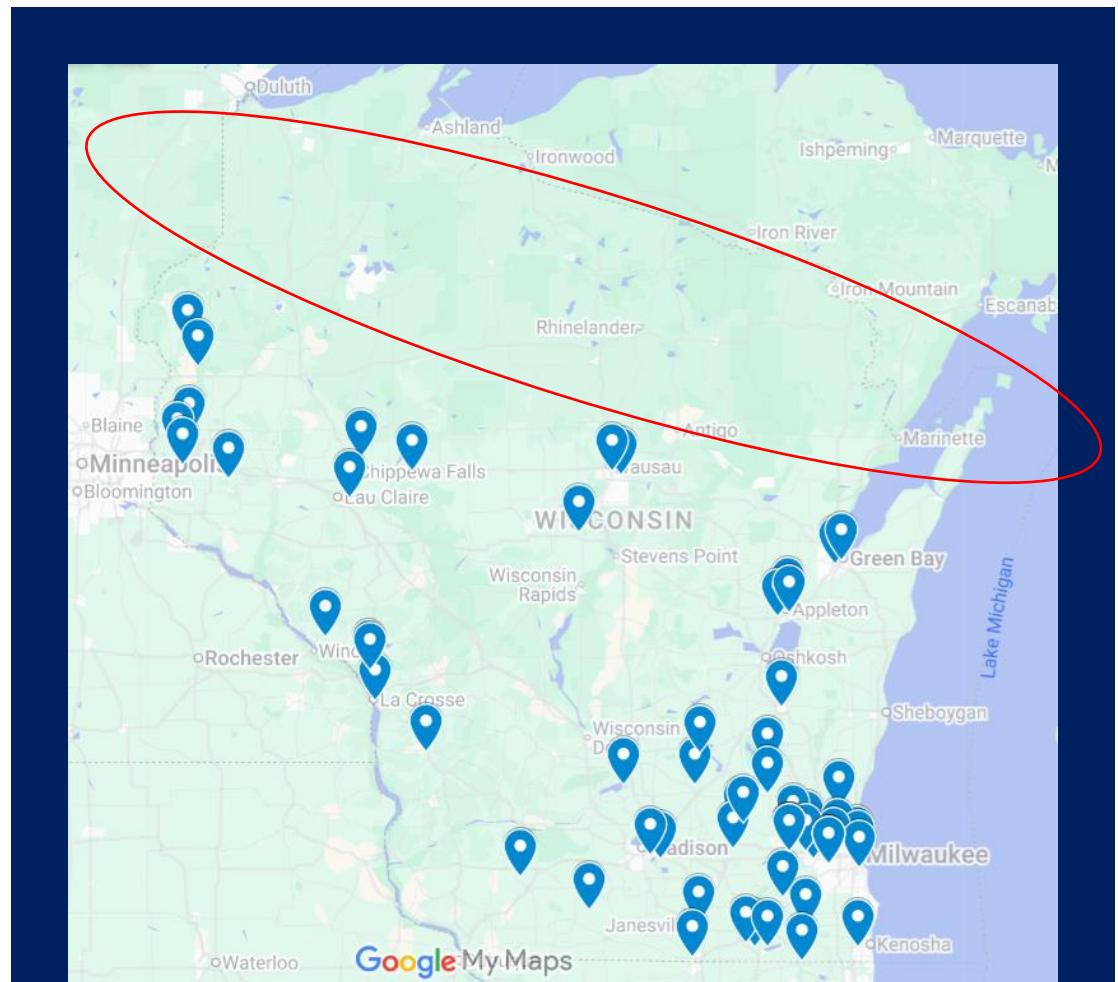
Radon mitigation service deserts

A **service desert** is a geographic area that has limited access to an essential service necessary for a decent quality of life.



Radon mitigation service deserts

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Survey of contractors bordering deserts

We identified 19 radon mitigation businesses bordering the northern Wisconsin radon service desert.

19 of 11 (58%) responded to brief phone survey asking:

1. **Distance:** On average, what distance would you be willing to travel to install a mitigation system in a home?
2. **Challenges:** Any challenges that impact your willingness to travel greater distances?
3. **Cost:** What costs do you incur when traveling greater distances? Mileage, meals, lodging, anything else? How much cost is added on?

Survey of contractors bordering deserts

Findings

There was an even split between contractors willing to travel within a

- 1-hour radius (n =3)
- 2-hour radius (n=3)
- ≥ 3 -hour radius (n=4)

**Note this does not include return driving, so a 2-hour radius means 4 hours roundtrip.*

Survey of contractors bordering deserts

Findings

- **Busier businesses prefer more local jobs.** Longer distances are considered more often when business is slow.
- **Faraway projects require more planning in advance** (hardware store access, weather and road conditions, cell phone service in remote areas).
- **Some make it work by making the best of it** (stacking jobs, making a vacation out of it).

Survey of contractors bordering deserts

Findings

Cost considerations:

- Mileage/driving time

- Difficulty of project

- Number of trips needed

- Hotel

- Demand for projects at the time

- Buffer for additional costs if on-site estimate isn't feasible

Large variance in total added costs, ranging from \$200 to double the cost of the install job with most citing \$200–\$400.

Updated DHS radon website

www.lowradon.org

