



Department of Health

1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509
(845) 808-1390



MaryEllen Odell
County Executive

Michael J. Nesheiwat, M.D.
Interim Commissioner of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 2, 2017

Contact: Barbara Ilardi, Public Information Officer, (845) 808-1390

Radon Concerns Continue: Risk in Putnam Remains High *NYS Health Department Offers Low Cost Home Test by Mail*

BREWSTER, NY— The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designates January as Radon Action Month, but the risks from exposure to radon continue year round. This colorless, odorless gas is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers in the U.S. For those who smoke, it greatly magnifies the cancer risk.

Radon occurs naturally in the environment, from the radioactive decay of uranium or thorium in the soil and it can seep into homes or ground water. Putnam County has been identified as a “high risk” area by the EPA and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). In fact, 32 percent of homes in Putnam are estimated to have levels high enough that action should be taken to fix it.

“Radon contributes to the high lung cancer death rate in Putnam County,” says Interim Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD. “It is not just smoking. The only way to know if you have high radon levels in your home is to test it. New homes can be built using radon-resistant construction. Old homes must be tested and if levels are high, steps can be taken to reduce the risk. The first step is to perform a test.”

The NYSDOH offers radon testing kits for purchase by mail for \$11, or they can be bought inexpensively at local home and hardware stores. The state health department test is a short-term test that remains in the home for a few days. The kit is then sealed and mailed in for analysis. The lab fee is included in the original \$11 charge and results are usually returned to the homeowner within a few weeks.

If elevated levels are found, the problem can be fixed. Costs vary and inexpensive solutions can correct some situations.

For more information about radon, or to order a kit (NYS residents only), visit the [New York State Department of Health website](#) or the [New York Radon Information website](#).

The Health Department's mission is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit the PCDOH website at www.putnamcountyny.com/health or visit the social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

###