



## JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Public Health Facility, 531 Meade Street, Watertown, New York 13601

Contact: Lisa Lagos, 315.786.3735

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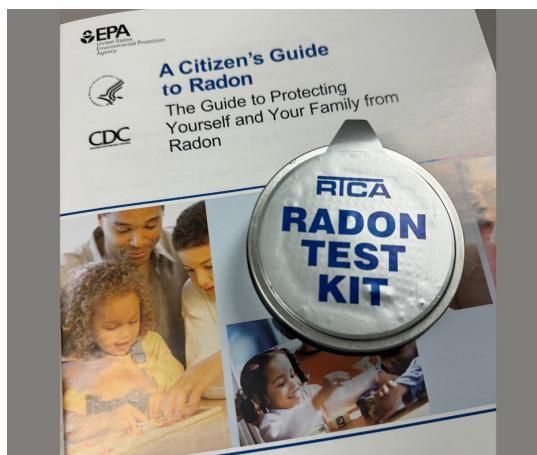
**Free Radon Test Kit Distribution**

**Watertown, NY** – January is National Radon Action Month, and the Jefferson County Public Health Service (JCPHS) would like to remind residents to test their homes for radon. JCPHS is offering a limited supply of free radon test kits to county residents. Interested individuals can visit the JCPHS facility, complete a brief one-page form, and receive a test kit. Each kit includes step-by-step testing instructions, mailing instructions, and a postage paid envelope to return the test to the laboratory. Test results are sent directly to the individual by the laboratory.

Radon is an invisible, odorless, and tasteless gas, so testing is the only way to determine if elevated levels are present in your home. It forms naturally from rocks and soil beneath the ground and can enter houses through cracks and other openings, where it may build up in indoor air. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) identifies radon as the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Overall, it is the second leading cause of lung cancer and contributes to approximately 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year. Smokers who are exposed to high radon levels at home face a risk of lung cancer that is about ten times higher than that of non-smokers without elevated radon exposure.

Approximately 23% of homes tested in Jefferson County have radon concentrations above 4 pCi/L, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's recommended "action level," at which mitigation systems should be installed to reduce radon levels. Additionally, about 19% of tested homes fall between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L, a range where the EPA advises homeowners to consider taking steps to lower radon exposure.

Home radon testing is most effective during colder months, when homes are generally more tightly sealed and allow in less outdoor air. Testing is recommended every five years, as well as after major renovations, weatherization projects, or the installation of a radon mitigation system. If test results show elevated radon levels, homeowners should contact a certified radon mitigator. A directory of certified radon mitigation professionals is available on the [New York State Department of Health website](#).



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