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Feds Launch Action Plan to Protect People and Families from Radon/Radon is one of the leading causes of lung cancer

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WASHINGTON –Today, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, the General Services Administration, and the departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Veterans Affairs have joined forces to help save lives and create healthier home and school environments for America's families. The plan brings together commitments that help to reduce exposure to radon and protect the health of Americans through leveraging and advancing existing state, local, and national programs. Radon exposure causes an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year and is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

"With nearly one in 15 homes affected by elevated levels of radon and thousands dying each year from radon-induced cancer, it's time to step up our actions in the federal government," EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson said. "Through the Federal Radon Action Plan, we're working with partner agencies to raise awareness about the threat of radon in our homes and to take steps to mitigate this hazard. Together our efforts will help reduce radon exposure and make our homes, schools and communities healthier places to live, learn, work and play."

The Federal Radon Action Plan brings together government agencies to demonstrate the importance of radon risk reduction, address finance and incentive issues to drive testing and mitigation, and build demand for services from industry professionals. The plan will help spur greater action in the marketplace, create jobs in the private sector, and significantly reduce exposure to radon. The plan includes strategies to reach low-income families, many of whom do not have the resources to make the simple fixes necessary to protect their homes and loved ones. Through its network of residential, educational, and care facilities as well as programs that address health, prevention, housing, and finance, the federal government is poised to directly or indirectly influence an estimated 7.5 million homes, schools and daycare facilities.

The plan includes federal government actions to reduce radon risks:

- Launching a cross-government outreach initiative to educate families about the health risks associated with radon exposure and the solutions to address the risks.
- Incorporating radon testing and mitigation into federal programs.
- Investing in new standards and updating codes for measurement and mitigation in schools, daycare facilities, and multi-family housing.
- Establishing incentives that drive testing and mitigation in the private and public sectors.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible and odorless radioactive gas. Approximately one in 15 American homes contain high levels of radon. Millions of Americans are unknowingly exposed to this dangerous gas. EPA and the Surgeon General recommend people test their homes for radon. Contact your state radon office for information on locating qualified test kits or qualified radon testers.

Information on the Federal Radon Action Plan: http://www.epa.gov/radon/action_plan.html

Information on radon and testing your home: <http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html>

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