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Radon threat

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Radon is an invisible radioactive gas that scientists believe is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, after smoking, and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. It contributes to about 21,000 deaths a year in the United States.

Utah's geology makes radon an even bigger concern. The state contains a lot of uranium, which produces radon as it decays. As a result, about 30 percent of Utah homes have elevated radon levels, and about 90 Utahns die each year from radon-related lung cancer.

The maps at <http://geology.utah.gov/utahgeo/hazards/radon.htm> illustrate where radon in Utah homes is likely to be above safe levels.

So what can you do to protect yourself and your family? The first step is testing your home. Just place a radon detector in a designated area, and after a few days send the detector back to the lab for analysis. You can find a radon test kit at a local hardware store or through Utah's radon program at www.radon.utah.gov.

Cornelia Maes Radon project officer Environmental Protection Agency

Denver

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