

Radon O'Fallon MO: What Homeowners Need to Know About Testing and Mitigation

Why Radon Is a Concern for O'Fallon Homeowners

If you live in O'Fallon or anywhere in St. Charles County, you have probably heard about radon gas. It is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that comes from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rock. It can seep into homes through cracks in the foundation, gaps around pipes, and other openings. Over time, breathing high levels of radon increases the risk of lung cancer. The EPA estimates that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. For homeowners in this area, understanding the risks and knowing what to do about radon is not just smart - it is essential for your family's health.

Many people assume that radon is only a problem in basements, but that is not the full story. Radon can accumulate on any floor, especially in well-sealed homes where air exchange is limited. The geology of St. Charles County, including areas like O'Fallon, St. Peters, and Wentzville, can contribute to elevated indoor radon levels. In fact, the EPA has mapped the region as having moderate to high potential for radon. The MoDNR also provides guidance and data that confirm these concerns.

The Real Story About Radon O'Fallon MO

When you search for [radon O'Fallon MO](#), you will find plenty of websites that list facts about radon, but what is often missing is practical advice from someone who has been in homes across this county. I have seen finished basements with expensive flooring that tested over 10 picocuries per liter, and I have seen crawlspaces that barely registered above background. The point is that you cannot guess. The only way to know whether your home has a problem is to test it. And not just once - radon levels can change with the seasons, weather, and even how you use your heating and cooling system.

A reliable approach starts with a short-term test using a charcoal radon detector, which you can buy at hardware stores or online. These tests are inexpensive and give you a snapshot. But for a more accurate picture, consider a continuous radon monitor. These devices measure radon over days or weeks and record hourly fluctuations. Air Sense Environmental uses continuous monitors because they provide the detail needed to plan effective mitigation. A single short-term test can miss spikes that happen at night or during a heavy rain.

Testing: The First Step

If you are buying or selling a home in O'Fallon, a radon test is often part of the home inspection process. Many home inspectors include radon testing as an add-on service, but it is worth asking whether they use a continuous monitor or a charcoal device. For a real estate transaction, the timeline is usually tight, so a short-term test may be the only option. Still, if the test comes back high, do not panic. High radon levels can be fixed.

For homeowners who are not in a transaction, I recommend testing during the cooler months when windows are closed and the home is more sealed. Place the detector in the lowest livable area, such as a basement or a first-floor room, away from drafts and direct sunlight. Follow the instructions carefully. Many people make the mistake of running the test for too short a time or placing the detector near a door that gets opened frequently. That can give you a false low reading.

Mitigation: What Works and What Does Not

If your test shows radon at or above 4 picocuries per liter, the EPA recommends taking action. That is where radon mitigation comes in. The most common and effective method is sub-slab depressurization, also called soil suction. This involves drilling a small hole through the concrete floor of your basement or slab, creating a suction point, and installing a pipe that runs up through the roof. A fan pulls the radon-laden soil gas from beneath the house and vents it safely outdoors. This is an active mitigation system because it uses a fan to create negative pressure.

There are also passive mitigation systems, which rely on natural air movement and stack effect to vent radon. These are less reliable in many homes, especially in tight modern construction. In my experience, active mitigation with a properly sized fan and sealed piping is almost always the right choice for homes in St. Charles County. The cost is reasonable, and the peace of mind is significant.

Other mitigation techniques include crack sealing, ventilation systems, and increasing air exchange in the basement. Crack sealing alone is rarely sufficient because radon can find its way through invisible gaps. It is better to combine crack sealing with a sub-slab system. A ventilation system that brings in fresh air can help dilute radon, but it may also increase energy costs and humidity issues. The best approach depends on the specific construction of your home and the radon level you are dealing with.

Choosing a Mitigation Professional

Not all contractors are qualified to handle radon mitigation. It is a specialized field that requires knowledge of soil gas behavior, building science, and proper installation techniques. Air Sense Environmental is one company that focuses on radon testing and mitigation for St. Charles

County homes, including O'Fallon, St. Peters, and Wentzville. They use continuous radon monitors for pre-mitigation testing and to verify that the system is working after installation. A good mitigation company will also provide a warranty and be willing to answer your questions about how the system works.

When you call a mitigation specialist, ask about their certification and experience. The EPA does not certify mitigators directly, but many states have programs. In Missouri, the MoDNR provides resources and can help you find qualified professionals. Also ask whether they will perform a post-mitigation test to confirm that radon levels have dropped below 4 pCi/L. This is a standard step, but some companies skip it to save time.

Common Myths About Radon

One myth I hear often is that radon is only a problem in older homes. In truth, radon can enter any home regardless of age. New homes can have higher radon levels if the soil underneath is rich in uranium and the house is tightly sealed without a proper venting system. Another myth is that radon is harmless in small amounts. While it is true that radon is everywhere outdoors at very low levels, the cumulative effect of breathing even moderate levels indoors over many years is a serious risk.

Some people think that a radon test is unnecessary if their neighbor tested low. Radon concentrations can vary dramatically even between houses on the same street. The soil composition, foundation type, and construction details all matter. That is why the only reliable way to know your home's radon level is to test it yourself.

Practical Tips for Homeowners

- Test your home for radon at least every two years, or after any major renovation that involves the foundation or basement.
- If you have a radon mitigation system installed, check the manometer (the gauge on the pipe) monthly to ensure the fan is running.
- Keep the system running continuously. Turning it off, even for a few weeks, can allow radon levels to climb back up.
- If you are buying a home, make radon testing part of your contingency. If the level is high, you can negotiate for mitigation or a price reduction.

Another simple step is to improve the ventilation in your basement, especially if you use it as a living space. Opening windows periodically helps, but it is not a substitute for mitigation. For homes with crawlspaces, sealing the crawlspace floor and venting it to the outside can also reduce radon entry.

Looking Ahead

Radon awareness is growing in St. Charles County, and that is a good thing. More homeowners are asking about radon O'Fallon MO during real estate transactions and home inspections. The availability of reliable testing and mitigation services means that high radon levels do not have to be a deal-breaker. They are a fixable problem. If you have not tested your home yet, now is the time. The cost of a test is small compared to the potential health impact of long-term exposure. And if you already know your home has high radon, call a qualified mitigation professional. There is no reason to live with that risk.