

What Every Radon Home Seller Should Know Before Listing

Understanding Radon in the Home Selling Process

Selling a home in St. Louis comes with its own set of challenges, and radon gas is one of those invisible issues that can surface during a real estate transaction. As a radon home seller, you might not think about the air quality in your basement until a buyer's home inspector brings it up. But the truth is, radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can seep into any home through cracks in the foundation, gaps around pipes, and other radon entry points. The EPA recommends action at a radon level of 4 picocuries per liter or higher, and many homes in the St. Louis area test above that threshold. Ignoring it until the last minute can delay a closing or even sink a deal.

I've worked with enough sellers to know that radon often feels like one more thing on a long to-do list. But a proactive approach can save you stress and money. Instead of waiting for a buyer to request a test, consider getting one done before you list. That way, you control the timeline and the narrative. If the test result comes back high, you have time to evaluate options like installing a radon mitigation system or adjusting your price. If it comes back low, you have a clean report to share with potential buyers. Either way, you're no longer guessing.

Why Radon Testing Matters for Sellers

Missouri doesn't have a state-level seller disclosure requirement specifically for radon, but that doesn't mean you should keep quiet about it. Many buyers in St. Louis are becoming more educated about radon, especially after hearing about it from their real estate agent or reading local news reports. A buyer who discovers high radon after moving in might come back at you legally, depending on how your disclosure was worded. Being upfront about a test you've already done can build trust and avoid surprises.

For a [radon home seller](#), the type of test you choose matters. A short-term test, like a passive radon detector you hang in the lowest lived-in level of the house, can give you results in two to seven days. But these tests can be influenced by weather, open windows, or even how the HVAC system is running. A more reliable option is an active radon monitor, also called a continuous radon monitor or CRM. These devices measure radon levels every hour and provide a detailed report. Air Sense Environmental uses continuous radon monitors for their St. Louis testing services, which gives a much more accurate picture over a short period. Some sellers opt for a long-term test that runs for more than 90 days, but that's usually not practical when you're trying to close a sale quickly.

What Happens When Radon Shows Up in a Test

Let's say you do a test and the radon level comes back at 6 pCi/L. That's above the EPA action level. Now what? You have a few paths forward. The most common solution is to install a radon mitigation system, which typically involves a vent pipe and fan that pulls radon from beneath the house and releases it outside. A good contractor can often install one in a day, and the cost usually falls between \$800 and \$1,500. In the context of a home sale, that's a small price to pay for peace of mind. Some sellers negotiate a credit to the buyer at closing, letting them handle the mitigation after they move in. Others fix it themselves to remove the closing contingency entirely.

I've seen deals fall apart because a seller refused to budge on a high radon reading, assuming the buyer was being unreasonable. But in a competitive market, a buyer who walks might not be replaced easily. On the flip side, I've also seen sellers successfully sell a home with elevated radon by being transparent and offering a reasonable credit. The key is to not treat radon as a hidden defect. Treat it as a manageable issue, like an old water heater that needs replacing.

How to Choose a Radon Test Method

If you decide to test before listing, you'll need to pick between a DIY radon test kit and a professional service. A radon test kit from a hardware store is cheap and easy to use, but it requires careful placement and strict adherence to instructions. One mistake, like opening a window during the test, can skew the result. A professional service like Air Sense Environmental brings expertise and equipment that most homeowners don't have access to. Their continuous radon monitors can detect fluctuations over time, which is especially useful in a home where the radon entry point might be intermittent. Professional testing also carries more weight with buyers and their agents, because it's seen as more objective.

There's also the question of timing. If you test too early, the results might not reflect conditions during the buyer's inspection period. If you test too late, you're scrambling. The sweet spot is usually four to six weeks before you expect to accept an offer. That gives you time to get the test done, receive the report, and decide on next steps. And if you end up installing a radon mitigation system, you'll want to retest afterward to make sure it's working. A single test result after mitigation can be a powerful selling point.

Radon and Real Estate Transactions

Radon is often treated as a negotiable item in a real estate transaction, much like a home inspection finding. Some buyers will ask for a test as part of their inspection contingency, especially if they have young children or are otherwise health-conscious. If your home already has a radon mitigation system, verify that it's still functioning. Systems can fail over time,

especially if the fan stops running or the vent pipe gets blocked. A simple retest can confirm that the system is still keeping radon levels low.

For new construction homes, radon-resistant construction techniques can be built in from the start, but that doesn't guarantee zero radon. Even homes with radon-resistant features should be tested after occupancy. As a seller of an older home, you might wonder if your home is more likely to have radon issues. Generally, older homes with crawl spaces or unfinished basements have more radon entry points, but radon can show up in any home, regardless of age or foundation type. The only way to know for sure is to test.

Final Thoughts for the St. Louis Seller

Selling a home is already a process full of inspections, disclosures, and negotiations. Adding radon to the mix doesn't have to be overwhelming. The smartest move a radon home seller can make is to get informed early. Talk to a home inspector who understands radon, or call a company like Air Sense Environmental that focuses specifically on radon testing. They can walk you through the options, explain what the numbers mean, and help you present the results to buyers in a way that feels transparent rather than alarming.

At the end of the day, radon is a fixable problem. It's not a stigma, and it doesn't mean your home is "sick." It just means the ground beneath your house is releasing a gas that needs to be managed. With a little planning, you can turn a potential deal-breaker into a non-issue. And if you're the buyer who's now considering selling, remember that your experience as a radon home seller doesn't have to be stressful. A test, a plan, and a willingness to communicate can keep your sale on track.