



MEDIA ALERT

Mike Holmes Tackles Radon, the Silent Killer in Canadian Homes

- What:** Radon Mitigation: Purging a Niagara Falls Home of a Silent Killer
- When:** 10 a.m. Thursday, September 18, 2014
- Where:** Home of Michael and Jana Katz, 6449 Marco Crescent, Niagara Falls
- Who:**
- Mike Holmes, star of *Holmes Makes it Right*
 - Connie Choy, air quality coordinator, Ontario Lung Association
 - Jim Diodati, Mayor of Niagara Falls
 - Scott Cryer, Pinchin Ltd, Mitigation Coordinator
 - Bob Wood, "Mr. Radon" and president of Canadian Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists
 - Kelley Bush, Head of Radon Education and Awareness, Health Canada
 - Wayne Gates MPP for Niagara Falls

Why:

Michael and Jana Katz have lived in their two-story suburban home in Niagara Falls since it was built 28 years ago. Recently, they decided to test the house for radon. The test returned a radon concentration of more than 950 Bq/m³. The Health Canada radon guideline is a maximum of 200 Bq/m³.

Radon is the number two cause of death by lung cancer (number one for non-smokers). It's a radioactive gas – colourless and odourless – that gets into houses from the soil. Almost every house in Canada has some radon. But is it enough to be dangerous and, if so, what can you do about it?

Mr. and Mrs. Katz are helping to raise awareness about the dangers of household radon contamination by letting us use their house to demonstrate how you test for radon and how it can be easily fixed if levels are high. TV star Mike Holmes and his team will film the action as a team of radon mitigation specialists make the Katz home safe again.

On site to answer questions will be experts from the Ontario Lung Association, Health Canada and the Canadian Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (CARST).

More Information: John Chenery | 416-864-9911 ext. 292 | jchenery@on.lung.ca

Radon – Quick Facts

From a 2012 Health Canada national survey of 14,000 homes:

- About **7 per cent** of Canadians are living in homes with high radon levels (over 200 Bq/m³)
- Manitoba, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Yukon had highest percentage of contaminated homes
- In Ontario, **13 of 36 Health Regions** had more than 10 per cent of homes test above the Health Canada guideline.
- No region of Canada is “radon-free”

Other statistics

- **16 per cent** of lung cancer deaths are radon-related
- In 2006, about **1,900 lung cancer deaths** nationwide were radon-related.
- If you smoke and live in a radon contaminated house, your chance of getting lung cancer is **one in three**.

What is Radon?

- Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from uranium in the ground that can get into your home undetected. You can't see it, smell it or taste it.
- Radon represents almost 50% of a person's lifetime radiation exposure.
- All homes have some level of radon. The question is how much and the only way to know is to test.
- The current Canadian guideline for radon in indoor air is 200Bq/m³

What are the health effects?

- The only known health effect associated to long term radon exposure is an increased risk of developing lung cancer.
- Radon is the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. 16% of lung cancers are estimated to be from radon exposure, resulting more than 3,200 deaths in Canada each year.
- Long-term exposure, especially for smokers, to elevated levels of radon in the home increases your risk of developing lung cancer.
- Smokers also exposed to high levels of radon have a significantly increased risk of developing lung cancer.

Radon Testing

- The only way to know the radon level in your home is to take a simple and inexpensive test. Long term testing for a minimum of 3 months is recommended.

- Testing can be done by purchasing a do-it-yourself radon test kit or by a measurement professional that is certified under the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program (C-NRPP).
- Health Canada is encouraging all Canadians to test their homes for radon

Reducing the radon level

- If the radon level in your home is high it can be fixed!
- Techniques to lower radon levels are effective and can save lives. Radon levels in most homes can be reduced by more than 80% for about the same cost as other common home repairs such as replacing the furnace or air conditioner.
- Hire a radon mitigation professional that has been certified under the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program (C-NRPP) to help you find the best way to reduce the radon level in your home.