**Myth:** I’ve lived in my home for so long, it doesn’t make sense to take action now.

**Fact:** You will reduce your risk of lung cancer when you reduce radon levels, even if you’ve lived with a radon problem for a long time.

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**Myth:** A short-term test can’t be used for making a decision about whether to fix your home.

**Fact:** A short-term test followed by a second short-term test can be used to decide whether to fix your home.

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**Myth:** Radon testing is difficult, time consuming and expensive

**Fact:** Radon testing is easy. You can test your home yourself or hire a qualified radon test company. Either approach takes only a small amount of time, effort and money.

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**Myth:** Homes with radon problems can’t be fixed.

**Fact:** There are simple solutions to radon problems in homes. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners have already fixed radon problems in their homes. Call 1-800-383-5992 for a list of Iowa certified mitigation contractors.

For more information about radon or to order additional test kits contact:

American Lung Association of the Upper Midwest
3000 Kelly Lane
Springfield, IL 62711
Toll Free: (800) 788-5864
E-Mail: info@healthhouse.org
http://www.healthhouse.org/radon/ia_kit.cfm

**ADDITIONAL RADON RESOURCES**

**Environmental Health Sciences Research Center**
Nancy G. Wyland
Center Coordinator
Occupational & Environmental Health
105 River Street, CPHB, Suite S300
Iowa City, IA 52242
Phone: (319) 335-4756
Fax: (319) 384-4138
nancy-wyland@uiowa.edu
www.ehsrc.org

**Environmental Protection Agency**
1-800-SOS-RADON
http://www.epa.gov/iaq/radon/

**National Environmental Health Assn.**
NEHA-NRPP Administrative Office
P.O. Box 2109
Fletcher, NC 28732
Phone: (800)269-4174 or (828)890-4117
Fax: (828)890-4161
E-Mail: angel@neha-nrpp.org
www.radongas.org
Congratulations on the birth of your child! Now is the time to take an important step to ensure that your child grows up in a healthy environment.

**TEST YOUR HOME FOR RADON GAS**

In Iowa, the average radon concentrations in homes are higher than in any other state in the country.

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, radioactive gas that enters homes through the foundation. Radon gas decays into radioactive particles that can get trapped in the lungs when you breathe. This can damage lung tissue and lead to lung cancer over the course of a lifetime. Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop lung cancer, and the amount of time between exposure and the onset of the disease may be many years.

Radon is estimated to cause between 18,000 and 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year in the U.S., according to the National Academy of Sciences and the Environmental Protection Agency. Radon-induced lung cancer deaths far outnumber more recognizable forms of cancer, such as brain cancer, liver cancer, stomach cancer and melanoma.

Because we cannot see, smell or taste radon and its health effects occur over time, it is often not recognized by the general public as the direct environmental threat that it is.

Starting your baby’s new life in a radon-safe household is one easy step that can be taken now to reduce a serious health risk to your infant and family.

The EPA recommends that all homes are tested for radon. If your radon level is 4 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) or higher, the home should be fixed.

Testing for radon is inexpensive and easy, and there are simple ways to fix a radon problem that aren’t too costly. New homes can be built with radon-resistant features.

A variety of methods are used to reduce radon in the home. Sealing cracks in floors and walls may help to reduce radon levels. In other cases, simple systems using pipes and fans may be used to reduce radon. These systems, known as soil suction, do not require major changes to your home. Radon contractors use other methods that may also work in your home. The right system depends on the design of your home and other factors.

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**RADON MYTHS**

**Myth:** Scientists aren’t sure radon really is a problem

**Fact:** Although some scientists dispute the precise number of deaths due to radon, all major health organizations (like the Centers for Disease Control, the American Lung Association and the American Medical Association) agree with estimates that radon causes thousands of preventable lung cancer deaths every year. This is especially true among smokers, as the risk to smokers is much greater than to non-smokers.

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**Myth:** Radon is only a problem in certain parts of the country.

**Fact:** High radon levels have been found in every state, with Iowa among the highest.

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**Myth:** A neighbor’s test result is a good indication of whether your home has a problem.

**Fact:** It’s not. Radon levels can vary greatly from home to home. The only way to know if your home has a radon problem is to test it.

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**Myth:** It’s difficult to sell homes where radon problems have been discovered.

**Fact:** Where radon problems have been fixed, home sales have not been blocked or frustrated. The added protection is sometimes a good selling point.