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January is National Radon Action Month

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated January as National Radon Action Month.

According to the EPA, an estimated 1 in 15 homes in the United States have high radon levels. "Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that seeps into your home through cracks in the foundation, walls and joints," stated Paul Pettit, Public Health Director for the Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments (GO Health). "It can also be found in well water and in dirt floors. Whether your home has a basement, sits on a slab, is old or brand-new, radon can build-up and go undetected."

Living in a home with high radon levels can be dangerous for your health. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer and is estimated to cause 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States. According to the EPA, because radon and tobacco smoke damage the lungs, high radon levels are especially dangerous for people who smoke. The risk of lung cancer is 10 times higher than for non-smokers.

Here are a few things you can do to protect your home and family from radon during National Radon Action Month:

- Test your home for radon. A limited number of test kits are available for Genesee County residents at no charge to them. Call the Health Department at 585-344-2580 ext. 5555. For residents outside of Genesee County, you can purchase a short-term test kit at your local hardware store.
- Contact your local schools to encourage radon education in school.
- Consider quitting smoking. Call the New York State Smoker's Quitline at 1-866-697-8487 and talk to a Specialized Quit Coach today.

For more information about National Radon Action Month,
visit: https://www.epa.gov/radon/national-radon-action-month-consumer-information

For more information about how to test your home or where to find a test kit, call the National Radon Hotline at 1-800-SOS-RADON (1-800-767-7236).

To learn more about radon, visit: http://www.cdc.gov/radon

For more information on GO Health programs and services, visit GOHealthNY.org or call your respective health department at:

- Genesee County: 585-344-2580 ext. 5555
- Orleans County: 585-589-3278

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