

# All About Radon

Science Facts and Analysis from Science for Georgia

## What is Radon?

Radon is a radioactive gas that is naturally produced from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils. Granite rock, which is common in Georgia, can have significant amounts of uranium<sup>1</sup>.

Fun fact: Stone Mountain is the largest piece of exposed granite in the world.

## How does Radon affect me?

When radon particles are inhaled, they can damage our lungs, which can lead to lung cancer. In fact, radon is estimated to cause **21,000 lung cancer deaths** in the US and **800 in Georgia** each year<sup>1</sup>. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking.<sup>2</sup>

## Should I stay away from all rocks?

Outside, radon quickly dissipates into the air around us, and is usually not cause for concern<sup>3</sup>.

Inside is another story. If a building is constructed on rock or soil that has high radon levels, the particles can seep in through the building's foundation and lead to very high indoor concentrations. It is estimated that **1 in 15 homes has high radon levels**, but you can also be exposed in schools and workplaces<sup>2</sup>. Levels are usually the highest in the basement of a building, closest to the source of the radon where air circulation is poorest<sup>3</sup>.

## How do I test for radon?

Radon is colorless, odorless, and tasteless, so the only way to detect it is with a radon test kit<sup>1</sup>. If you live in Georgia, you can go to the University of Georgia's [Radon Education website](#) and buy a test kit for \$15<sup>4</sup>. Through a new program in Georgia, you can also borrow an electronic radon monitor for free at your local library<sup>5</sup>. You can also find radon test kits in most home improvement stores or hire a professional to test your home<sup>1</sup>.

## My home has high radon levels. What do I do?

If your radon levels are above the EPA limit, you should hire a professional to install a **radon reduction system** in your house. This system will pull the radon from underneath your home and ventilate it outdoors, keeping you and your family safe.

## About Science for Georgia

Science for Georgia is a 501c3 dedicated to bridging the gap between scientists and the public through training, outreach opportunities, and direct contact with the public, policymakers, and the press. Science for Georgia highlights how science can impact people's lives and advocates for the responsible use of science in public policy.

Please reach out with any questions or comments [info@sci4ga.org](mailto:info@sci4ga.org)

## Sources

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