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January is National Radon Action Month

by homewarranty.com

Do you ever think about your home's Radon Levels? If you answered no, you're not alone. Many homeowners aren't aware of what Radon is or where it comes from. Here are our tips to get you thinking about your home's Radon levels and help keep your family safe from this misunderstood, naturally occurring gas.

What is Radon?

Radon is a colorless, odorless radioactive gas that forms from decayed elements like uranium. To put it simply: it's a dangerous gas that we can't detect on our own. It's found in soil and can enter a home through cracks in the foundation and walls. Radon levels are usually highest in basements and crawlspaces since those are closest to the soil.

Why is Radon dangerous?

According to the EPA, Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers. When Radon breaks down into solid radioactive elements, it attaches to dust and particles floating through the air, making it possible to inhale into the lungs. Because we can't see, smell, or taste it, we're not able to identify our home's Radon levels unless we get them tested.

Which homes need to be tested?

No home is exempt. From mid-century to new construction, homes of all types need to be tested for Radon — it's the only way

you'll know your Radon exposure levels. It's important not to rely on test results from other homes in your neighborhood. Your next-door neighbor may have a completely different Radon level.

How do you test your home for Radon?

To test your home's Radon levels, hire a professional who specializes in Radon Testing. They will use a testing device to monitor your home's Radon levels over a period of time (typically 2-5 days). They will also analyze the results, and advise you if it's necessary to take further action. Fortunately, correcting Radon levels is easy and relatively inexpensive. Plus, they'll answer any questions you may have about Radon.

Potential solutions for high Radon levels

If you find that your home has high levels of Radon, contact a qualified Radon mitigation contractor to install a Radon mitigation system. The mitigation system draws Radon from beneath your home and releases it to the outside with a fan. The average cost of this system ranges from \$800 To \$1,500.

For more information, visit **RadonResources.com**. The National Radon Directory is the only database that consolidates state and county specific Radon information into one centralized location for the benefit of local search capabilities and national research.

January Calendar

January 1 - New Year's Day

January 10 - National Cut Energy Costs Day

January 20 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

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Homeowner Tip:



Cut Your Energy Costs Day is 1/10

Check if your water heater is losing heat. You can tell by simply touching it. If it feels warm, chances are you should insulate it. Insulating your hot water heater is simple. Most home improvement stores sell pre-cut fiberglass water heater insulation jackets starting at around \$20. Use foam insulators for the exposed pipes.

Appliance Maintenance Resolutions for 2020

It's tough enough to keep the New Year's Resolutions we make for ourselves, let alone our appliances. However, a little maintenance can go a long way to saving you money this year.

Heating System - Filters should be cleaned once a month and replaced every three months. First, be sure the furnace is turned off. Remove the access panel and slide out the screen. Clean dirt buildup, and dry filter before replacing it.

Oven - Keep it as clean as possible after each use. As grease and spills build up, the oven has to work harder to do its job, especially heating elements, which use more energy consumption.

Dishwasher - Clean the trap located under the bottom rack of your dishwasher. Hand wash in warm, soapy water and rinse thoroughly.

Refrigerator - Clean the coils once or twice a year. They are located at the bottom of the unit or in the back. A vacuum cleaner with a stiff brush attachment should do the trick.

A/C - Turn off power at breakers. Make sure the outdoor unit is clear of debris. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for switching out the air filter. This should be done every one to three months for optimal efficiency.

Finally! Some New Year's resolutions we can all keep.



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One-Pot Zucchini Mushroom Pasta

Here's a creamy, hearty, pasta dish that's perfect for a January evening. Make it in just 20 minutes...and in just one pot!

Ingredients:

1 pound spaghetti
1 pound cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced
2 zucchini, thinly sliced and quartered
2/3 cup peas
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
2 sprigs thyme
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1/3 cup grated Parmesan
1/4 cup heavy cream

Directions:

In a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium high heat, combine spaghetti, mushrooms, zucchini, peas, garlic, thyme and 4 1/2 cups water; season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until pasta is cooked through and liquid has reduced, about 8-10 minutes. Stir in Parmesan and heavy cream.

Serve immediately.



Photo & recipe courtesy of delish.com