



Butler County Department of Environmental Services

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COUNTY EARNS FREE TEST KITS THROUGH RADON OUTREACH PROGRAM

Butler County is one of 24 counties in the nation to earn 200 free radon testing kits through participation in the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Radon Outreach Program. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designated January as National Radon Action Month, and counties across America are sponsoring campaigns to increase awareness about the serious health risks associated with radon exposure and the importance of testing homes.

The program's goal is to increase awareness about the harmful effects of radon and motivate residents to take action to protect their health. The EPA has indicated that geologic conditions in Butler County may contribute to high radon levels. Butler County's radon levels can be viewed at www.epa.gov/radon/zonemap.html. According to the EPA, radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year, and about 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. Radon is an invisible and odorless radioactive gas. It can seep through any crevice - from cracks in foundation walls to gaps around pipes.

This is NACo's third year to sponsor its radon outreach program and Butler County's third time to earn the radon testing kits. Last year, Butler County distributed more than 300 kits to county residents at its Home Safety Event. Counties across the U.S. applied to receive the free kits, but only 10 were selected. Winning counties were chosen based on their unique and innovative outreach, education and mitigation efforts for diverse and low-income areas of the county.

"Using a radon testing kit is the first action residents can take to protect their families against radon's harmful effects," said Butler County Commissioner Gregory Jolivette.

This year, Butler County Community Development (BCCD) will send radon testing kits to its clients who participated in one of five of its homeowner programs during 2007: Home Rehabilitation, Emergency Utility, Home Repair, New Construction, and Down Payment Assistance programs.

“In addition,” stated Donna Everson, BCCD director, “if a client’s radon test indicates anything above the national action level of 4 picocuries per liter, BCCD will assist its clients with securing funds to implement mitigation techniques at their home.”

“For the last two years, Butler County has conducted effective radon awareness campaigns,” said Butler County Commissioner Donald Dixon. “For the 2008 Radon Outreach Campaign, Butler County would like to focus not only on increasing radon awareness, but actually helping lower-income families implement radon mitigation techniques.”

Butler County Commissioner Charles Furmon stated, “Butler County is pleased to receive the 200 free radon testing kits and looks forward to promoting this public health initiative again.”

During January, limited radon testing kits and information about radon will also be available at Butler County departments of Safety, Environmental Services, Health, and Job & Family Services. Residents can also log on to www.butlercountides.org to view a sheet of frequently asked questions about radon.

For more information about radon, visit <http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html>.

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