

So, you've tested your home for radon and it has tested at or above the action level set by the Environmental Protection Agency. Now what do you do? The very first thing to do if your radon level was above 4 pCi/l but lower than 7 or 8, is to retest your home. The first test showed what the radon levels were during that specific time period. Testing again at a later date gives you a better picture of radon exposure in your home. Average the two results, and if the level is still above 4 pCi/l you've got a real radon problem. If your initial test results are near or above 10 pCi/l, you've definitely got a radon problem.

With confirmed high radon levels, you have two choices: 1. Ignore the elephant in the room and do nothing; or 2. Protect your family by doing your best to bring that level down.

1st Choice:

The choice of doing nothing, of course, puts your family at risk. Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will get lung cancer, but are you willing to take the chance someone near and dear to you might get lung cancer from it? You might consider opening all the windows and doors to dilute the radon, but that's hardly practical here in north Georgia.

2nd Choice:

The right choice is to fix your home to prevent radon from entering. We know that through proper installation of a radon mitigation system, indoor radon levels can usually be lowered to 2 pCi/l or below. The most effective mitigation system is a sub-slab suction system that pulls air from beneath the home's footprint and exhausts it above the eave of the home, either through the roof or up the outside of your home.

Your most important decision in finding a reliable radon mitigation contractor is to select someone who is certified by the National Environmental Health Association (www.neha-nrpp.org) or National Radon Safety Board (www.nrsb.org).

After you've fixed your home, be sure to do a follow-up test right after installation to verify that the radon level has been reduced. And retest your home every 3 or 4 years.

Contact the Gwinnett Cooperative Extension Service at 678.377.4010 for complete information on mitigation systems, choosing a contractor, etc. If you haven't already tested your home, you can buy a radon test kit for your home at the Gwinnett Extension Service for \$8.

