PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA
Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"
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To: Local Media

From: Central Michigan District Health Department's Environmental Health Division

RE: Radon Awareness Month

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TEST KITS OFFERED FOR RADON AWARENESS MONTH

January is Radon Awareness month and the Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) invites you and your family to test for radon in your home. Indoor radon is a national environmental health problem. It has been determined to be the most serious cancer-causing agent that the general public encounters in the environment. "Radon can become concentrated in our homes, especially in the winter months when doors and windows are closed, so this is the best time to test," stated Director of Environmental Health Services, Steve King.

Radon is a Class A carcinogen (cancer-causing) radioactive gas. You cannot see, smell, or taste radon, but it may be a problem in your home. When you breathe air which contains radon, you increase your risk of getting lung cancer. In fact, the Surgeon General says that radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in America. About 21,000 Americans will die each year of radon-related lung cancer. If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is especially high. Some scientific studies of radon exposure indicate that children may be more sensitive to radon. This may be due to their higher respiration rate and their rapidly dividing cells, which may be more vulnerable to radiation damage.

Radon tests are easy to complete and kits are available at most local health departments. "You should test your home for radon if you have never tested, moved to a new home, recently remodeled, or it has been several years since testing," says Director King. **During the month of January, test kits at all branch offices of CMDHD will be discounted to $5 or free with a donation of a nonperishable food item.** Donated food items will be given to local food pantries that have supplies depleted during the holiday season. Protect your family by testing for this unseen hazard and help your community too.

More general Radon information is available by calling the Central Michigan District Health Department or visiting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Website at http://www.epa.gov/radon/index.html or http://www.michigan.gov/deq/ and search "radon".

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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