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Modernizing Canada's radon guidance: Health Canada's data-driven approaches for radon reduction to address rising radon levels

Tuesday 10 June 2025 11:30 (30 minutes)

Radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas present in our homes, is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. With nearly 1 in 5 Canadian homes exceedingly Health Canada's radon guideline level and only 5% of households having tested for radon, radon exposure remains a critical public health issue that is responsible for over 3,000 lung cancer deaths annually in Canada. As part of its National Radon Program, Health Canada consistently reviews and updates national radon risk guidance and resources to adapt to the evolving radon landscape in Canada, ensuring that its actions are evidence-based and effectively mitigate this health risk.

With emerging data indicating growing radon risks for Canadians, Health Canada has been promoting measures to reduce radon exposure and is actively updating key guidance elements. However, due to the various factors affecting radon levels across Canada's varied geography and climate, identifying data that directly answers key questions about Canadians' radon exposure can be challenging. To address this, the National Radon Program conducts targeted studies to fill data gaps and gather the necessary evidence for informed decision-making.

Health Canada will present its recent progress in various radon reduction strategies, highlighting the data and evidence driving these efforts. This includes research and studies supporting the strengthening of Canada's building codes and the modernization of its radon testing guidance, most notably with the proliferation of electronic radon monitors in recent years. The presentation will also expand on the existing unknowns in the radon testing of Canadian homes and explore Health Canada's efforts to answer these remaining questions, focusing on the data and analyses behind policy development. Through these strategies, that look to increase radon testing and mitigation rates, ultimately more Canadians will be protected from the hazards of radon in their homes.

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