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A Guide To Radon Exposure: *What You Need To Know To Protect Your Family*

When you imagine your dream home, you likely focus on location, housing type, layout and finishes. How about imagining yourself thriving and healthy between the walls that comprise your home? It goes without saying, that that is a crucial part of the picture, but there is an additional element of blissful homeownership. We spend a lot of time, when securing a home, focusing on the things that you can see. What about the things that you can't see?

And we're not talking about what's hidden within the structure. We're talking about the air you, your family, and your friends breathe every single day, both awake and asleep. Specifically, we are talking about radon exposure.

What is radon exactly?

Radon is defined as "a radioactive gas that is odourless, colourless, and tasteless. It is produced by the breakdown of uranium found in sediment (soil), rocks, and water. When radon is released into the atmosphere it gets diluted and poses negligible risk to human health."

Radon exists throughout Canada, but can vary from area to area, depending on the composition of the bedrock or sediment upon which a house is built. Between 2009 and 2011, Health Canada conducted a study on radon concentrations at a representation of 14,000 homes across the country. Results from the study showed that seven percent of these homeowners were living with high levels of radon and that radon levels vary widely in different geographical regions.

What are the implications?

You may not realize that as radon is a naturally occurring gas in the atmosphere, it is automatically present in your home. While lower levels of radon pose no threat to your health, higher levels can be very dangerous. This effect can be compounded when the air in question is indoors. If it accumulates, then the danger increases.

Radon, when inhaled in larger quantities, remains in the lungs and causes decay, and eventually can contribute to cancer (Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer and it is estimated that 16 per cent of lung cancer deaths among Canadians are attributable to indoor radon exposure, according to Health Canada). This is why Health Canada recommends that all homeowners get their homes tested for radon exposure.

How does it get into my house?

Like we said, radon naturally occurs from the sediment, soil and bedrock upon which your home is built. It can creep in to your home through cracks in the foundation or floors as well

as through gaps around service pipes, window casements, sump pumps and generally where the seal between house and nature is not airtight.

Home construction guidelines now require design and construction elements that are meant to impede radon from entering the home. However, these are not foolproof, which is why Health Canada recommends that everyone test their homes, regardless of their age.

How do you test for radon?

You can't see, taste or smell radon, so you need to employ other mechanisms. You can either purchase a do-it-yourself kit, or employ a certified radon professional.

Because levels of radon vary over time, it is recommended that you test for a three month period to ensure an accurate reading. For information on the do-it-yourself radon test kits, contact Health Canada at radon@hc-sc.gc.ca or **1-866-225-0709**. These kits retail for around \$25-\$75. Certified Radon professionals can be located through www.c-nrpp.ca.

According to Health Canada, remedial action should be taken if "the average annual radon concentration exceeds 200 becquerels (which is the unit of measurement scientist use to measure the concentration) per cubic metre (200 Bq/m³) in the normal occupancy area. The higher the radon concentration, the sooner remedial measures should be undertaken."

For most, homeownership is one of the most rewarding experiences that exist. Pride of ownership, along with the opportunity to throw down roots and express yourself within your own walls really is unparalleled, but what this underscores too is the responsibility that goes along with that pleasure.

At urbaneer.com we look at your home ownership experience from all the sides and provide you with comprehensive, thoughtful support. We've got your best interests as a homeowner in our sights always. Check out our site, www.urbaneer.com for our past blogs on further important information like this, including *The Search For A Healthy Home* and *What are the Real Financial, Emotional and Health Costs of Commuting?* With a multi-disciplinary education in housing and decades of experience in the Toronto housing market, Urbaneer is here to help!

We're here to earn your trust, then your business.

Steven Fudge, Sales Representative
& **The Urbaneer Team**

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Beautiful Bain Avenue in Riverdale \$1,299,000

For the discerning, be assured this heart-grabbing residence boasts exceptional features and finishes. We drool over the spectacular sun-drenched and well-proportioned entertainment level, with its showcase gourmet kitchen with substantial gas range that takes centre stage. The four bedrooms are well-proportioned, drenched in light, feature some clever storage solutions, and share pretty swish spa baths fitted with luxe finishes. We love the expansive third floor master suite with its indulgent ensuite washroom (yes! to the soaker tub) and gorgeous park vista roof terrace. And the lower level, with its 'perfect-for-kids' family room fitted with warm broadloom, recessed lighting, 3-piece bath and generous laundry zone connecting to the rear garden outshines most Riverdale properties.



A Concrete 'n Cool Corktown Loft \$850,000

Inside this well-appointed 1154 square-foot 2 bed + den loft space, you'll be immediately struck by polished concrete floors that flow throughout the space. Boasting open concept loft-living at its finest, you'll be met by a wall of windows that run the full height of 10 foot ceilings illuminating a living-dining area and bright, contemporary kitchen. Caesarstone counters, stainless steel appliances, extra-high cabinets and a generous peninsula make this a kitchen to envy! Enjoy an evening cocktail with friends on your own 270 square foot west-facing terrace that has a gas line for a barbecue! A fab den offers you space to pursue more studious or creative activities, and you can shut out the world and relax in your master suite which features an enviable walk-through closet and modern ensuite bath.



A Cube Loft on College Street in Little Italy \$759,900

This modern 6-storey boutique building contains 21 lofts ranging in size from 543 square feet to just over 2100 square feet. Loft 201 is around 1081 square feet of interior living space plus a 200 square foot south-facing treescape terrace, stacked parker and locker. Featuring a split 2-bedroom 2-bath floor plan, this contemporary cube boasts 9 1/2 foot ceilings, wood floors, and some sizzling chic upgrades. I love the dreamy white lacquer Scavolini kitchen with its integrated appliances, gas cooking and stone counters. And the spa inspired washrooms with porcelain and glass mosaic - either a deep soaker tub or frameless glass shower - provide that euro-fresh aesthetic we all crave these days. As UrbanToronto said, it's a "fusion of Italian zest with modern design, making this truly 'the sweet life.'"



Bijou Brilliance in the Iconic Merchandise Lofts \$364,900

Upon entering this exquisite loft that expands over 720 square feet, the eye is immediately drawn upwards, pulled by soaring 14 foot ceilings and huge windows. Marrying the grit of its past with a chic redux, the loft features a thoughtfully designed and highly useable study/office area, which holds potential to be developed into a more private area, should a new owner so desire. A dreamy chef's kitchen which is open to the spacious entertainment zone is sublime and offers ample creative space to savour, celebrate and enjoy with all whom you hold dear. We particularly adore the expansive master sanctuary, which continues into the adjacent luxe spa-like bath, with convenient ample storage.



Shouldn't Your Property Be Here?

Steven's real estate expertise includes:

- Featured in the New York Times, Reuters Press Canadian Real Estate Magazine, CBC Radio, Global TV, The Globe & Mail, and National Post
- Multi-disciplinary Master's Degree on Housing
- Over 25 years experience from Renovation & Design to Sales & Marketing
- Comprehensive understanding of Toronto's 42 Central Neighbourhoods
- Consistently a Bosley Top 10 Producer (#6 in 2014!)
- Attained 106.6% of the asking price for our 2014 listings!
- We offer design, merchandising & staging services to help achieve the maximum sale price of your property



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