



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Indoor Air Quality – Radon, Carbon Monoxide, Smoking

### Radon

Radon is a odorless, tasteless, colorless, radioactive gas that can be emitted into the air of buildings including schools, offices, and homes. This harmful gas can enter into a building through cracks in walls, floors, and gaps around pipes. It is important to know that any home or building can have radon regardless of the age or type.

Exposure to air with high levels of radon is a health concern because the radioactive particles become trapped in your lungs and over time damage the lung tissue which can lead to lung cancer. It is estimated that radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer with approximately 20,000 lung cancer deaths a year.

Radon is present all over the United States with elevated levels being found in approximately 1 out of every 15 homes. To find out if your home has high radon levels, all you need to do is perform a simple do-it-yourself test and mail it to a lab for your results. Kits can be purchased at your local hardware store or ordered through the



Iowa Radon Hotline at 1-800-383-5992.

### Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous, colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that is a result of exhaust and fumes from burning fuels, such as gas, kerosene, propane, wood and coal.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can vary from person to person and amount of exposure. High levels of CO exposure can result in death. Some of the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include:

- \* Headache
- \* Dizziness
- \* Nausea
- \* Loss of consciousness
- \* Fatigue
- \* Drowsiness
- \* Vomiting

If you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, immediately move to fresh air, seek medical attention, and have your home checked for CO before re-entering.

Some ways to help avoid CO poisoning is to have your vehicle exhaust system, home heating system and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliance serviced yearly. Take additional steps to prevent CO exposure by not running any gas appliance indoors without proper ventilation or near a window, door, or vent that leads indoors. It is recommended that each home have a carbon monoxide alarm to detect high levels of this dangerous gas and prevent illness.

### Smoking

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of smoke emitted from a cigarette and that exhaled from the smoker.

There are over 4,000 chemicals found in secondhand smoke with over 250 known to be toxic or cause cancer.



Secondhand smoke is dangerous to the health of all ages. It can worsen heart disease and respiratory problems, increase risk of SIDS in babies, can trigger asthma attacks, and cause lung cancer.

There is no safe level of secondhand smoke. When a smoker smokes indoors, the air does not only become filled with the toxic chemicals, but the chemicals cling to rugs, curtains, clothes, toys, and other materials and can remain in the room for months. Only 15% of cigarette smoke is actually breathed in by the smoker alone; the other 85% stays in the air for everyone to breathe.

Iowa is one of many states that have comprehensive smokefree air laws and regulations in place. Since 2008, the Iowa Smokefree Air Act has prohibited smoking in almost all public places including restaurants, bars, outdoor entertainment events, offices, health care facilities, and child care facilities.

## Pouring on the Pounds

Are you pouring on the pounds? When you have three sugary drinks a day, it's like you are drinking up to 40 sugar packets. All that sugar means extra calories that can lead to obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Choose water, fat-free milk, or one percent milk instead and let's get healthy.

Need help drinking more water? Aim to have a glass before every meal, always carry a full water bottle, and record how much you drink in your food journal. When you get bored try adding lemon, cucumber, crushed ice, or flavor packets.

Drinking water has a variety of health benefits! Water helps maintain your body fluids, energizes muscles, flushes out the toxins, promotes healthier skin and hair, and reduces chances of over eating.

Consider joining a team for Live Healthy Iowa and start getting healthy today! Visit [www.livehealthyiowa.org](http://www.livehealthyiowa.org) for more information.





## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Scott County Health Department will be closed Wednesday, January 1, 2014 in observance of New Years Day.
- Scott County Health Department will be closed Monday, January 20, 2014 in observation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00PM Thursday, January 16, 2014.

### OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

### OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.

## SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Scott County Administrative Center, 4th Floor

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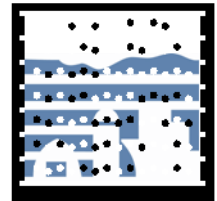
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