

# PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION



## National Condom Month

### Primal PPE

The pandemic has put Personal Protective Equipment at center stage, and perhaps no form of PPE has a longer or more storied history than the humble condom. Humans have developed and used devices like condoms since prehistoric times, using such materials as animal skin and organs, plant-based fabrics, silk, and somewhat questionable choices like horns and tortoise shell. Charles Goodyear's discovery of rubber vulcanization in 1839 and the invention of latex in the 1920's greatly improved upon the original concept, delivering the first modern lubricated condoms in 1957— still one of our most effective methods to prevent unintentional pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. February is observed as national condom month by the American Sexual Health Association, meant to highlight this low-cost, highly effective method of family planning and protecting sexual health.

### The Spice of Life

Variety, of course! We have progressed from clumsy, marginally effective materials to safer, more comfortable latex and latex-free alternatives, and condoms are now available in sizes, styles, colors, textures, and flavors to make protecting sexual health just as pleasurable as it is responsible. Some even glow in the dark! We are truly fortunate to be supported by the Iowa Department of Public Health in providing free, accessible condoms and other preventive barriers to our community. The STD & HIV Prevention staff at SCHD are always happy to accept suggestions for new agency partners and community locations to place condom dispensers or provide a supply for discrete distribution to clients. Let us know your ideas! Here's to a safe, sexually healthy 2021.



### OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department promotes, protects, and preserves health through leadership, services, education, and partnerships.

### OUR VISION:

Scott County —  
A safe and healthy  
community.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

- *Scott County Board of Health Meeting, via WebEx, 12:00 PM, Thursday, February 18, 2021.*

## Links

- Risk of radon death for smokers and non smokers.

<https://www.nachi.org/radon1.htm#:~:text=Radon%20Risk%20If%20You%20Smoke%20%20%20,a%20car%20crash%20%204%20more%20rows%20>

- Radon gas diagram.

<https://cdn.homeguide.com/assets/images/content/homeguide-dangers-of-radon-diagram-for-mitigation.jpg>

# Radon

## Health Risk

Radon gas is a tasteless and odorless gas that is excreted by the decomposition of naturally occurring radioactive elements in soils and rocks. As these elements break down, they produce radon gas. Radon gas harms the lung tissue by damaging DNA. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the world, behind smoking. Radon is responsible for around 21,000 lung cancer deaths in the nation each year. The risk is even higher for smokers. The link above will guide you to a chart displaying the general risk of radon compared to other causes of death.

## The Solution

The first step to avoiding the damaging effects of radon is to get your house tested. Radon tests can typically be found at your local hardware stores or even online. The tests are generally just a packet of activated charcoal that will uptake the gas. Once they have completed their cycle, they are sent to the lab listed on the test. The action level for radon gas is 4pCi/l. There are professional companies that can help you mitigate your exposure.



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