

BCREA Community of Practice – December 6, 2023

Additional Questions with Answers Provided by Dr. Noah Quastel from the BC Lung Foundation

1. Did COVID affect or influence the current situation re exposure to radon?

Yes, in that more people worked from home. Radon levels tend to be higher in homes than workplaces, and not enough people are testing and mitigating for radon. There is a recent academic article on this [here](#) (free access).

2. Where are the best sources to obtain the long-term radon tests?

BC Lung Foundation [sells alpha track detectors](#), which are a cheaper option and one-time use. When buying from BC Lung Foundation, you also contribute to the BC Radon Map.

If you want a third-party opinion on the best place to buy a test kit, [Take Action on Radon maintains a database](#).

If you want a digital monitor for repeated use, the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program (C-NRPP) [has a list of products](#) it approves, and you can buy them from major retailers.

3. Once tested are radon levels likely to change over time?

Radon levels vary significantly from day to day—that's why we recommend the 91-day test over shorter-term testing. Beyond that, radon levels can change over the years. The main causes of change we know about include:

- Shifts and changes to soil and water flow in and around a property.
- Concrete settling and shrinking in new homes (generally over two years) creating gaps in the foundation.
- Cracks forming from subsidence.
- Significant changes to the building (such as adding rooms or floors).
- Energy retrofits.

It is advised to retest routinely every five to 10 years and after any significant renovation or energy retrofit.

4. Why are some tests not approved?

Devices can be badly made or not compare well (e.g. readings do not match) to proven reliable professional grade equipment.

C-NRPP maintains a database of approved devices [here](#).

For digital monitors, click [here](#).