VERMONT

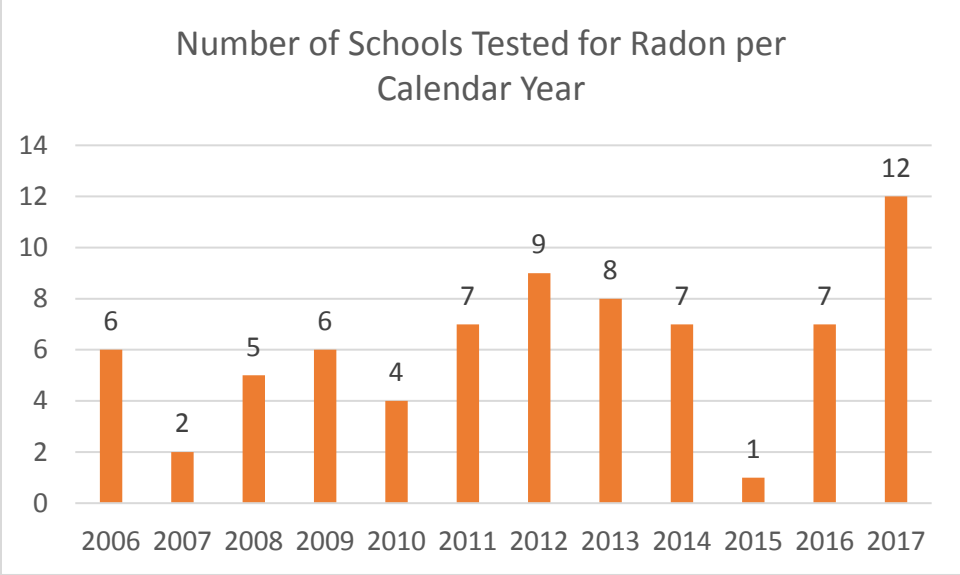
Radon Testimony

1. The history of the Department's practice of testing 10 schools per year for elevated levels of radon

The Health Department has been providing free school radon testing since at least 2006. Radon testing is offered as part of the suite of services offered by the Envision Program, created by Act 125 in 2000. Funding for radon testing is provided by a $105,000 EPA State Indoor Radon Grant. In the current year $3,000 are budgeted for school radon test kits and $20,000 are budgeted for residential test kits. Short-term radon kits, which cost around 8 dollars a piece are placed in schools during the winter heating season by the Health Department's Public Health Industrial Hygienist, Michelle Thompson, who is a certified Radon Measurement Specialist. The Radon grant pays for 45% of her salary. Michelle goes back to the school two days later to pick up the kits, and sends them to the RTCA analytical lab. The health department receives the results from the lab within a week or two and a report is sent to the school soon thereafter.

Each year Envision's services are marketed to schools, including radon testing. Outreach materials have been sent to principals, school nurses, and school board members. In the past we have sent physical letters, more recently we have sent emails and placed messages in the Agency of Education's Weekly Field Memo. Approximately 6 to 12 schools contact us each year in response to this outreach. Sometimes after one school is tested other schools in the same school district will ask to be tested. To date, the number of schools tested has not been dependent on the amount budgeted for test kits. The number of schools tested has been dependent on the demand for testing. We cannot force schools to test. We can only encourage them.

2. Where that figure of 10 schools per year came from



The Health Department keeps records for all the schools that have tested. During the past five years the number of schools tested has varied between 7 and 12.

3. What is done if elevated levels of radon are detected

If elevated radon levels are detected during the radon screening test, the school is encouraged to contract with a certified radon measurement specialist to verify the elevated levels. This can take the form of additional short-term testing in tandem with the use of a continuous read monitor which is left in the area for at least 24 hours to learn more about how radon levels change over the course of the day as the heating and ventilation system is turned on and off and the buildings occupants come and go. Sometimes this information can be used to identify a way to reduce radon levels by limiting access to the area of concern or by making adjustments to the ventilation system. When a mitigation system is indicated, the school is encouraged to contract with certified radon mitigation specialist, who presents the school with a mitigation plan. This may involve the installation of a soil depressurization system which gives the soil gas someplace to go that is preferable to going into the interior of the building. Usually a fan is required to help pull the soil gas into a pipe which is installed and vents above the roof of the building. After the system is installed the school is encouraged to contract with a third-party measurement specialist, not the mitigator, to verify that the mitigation effort was successful.

4. Who bears the costs or any remediation that may be required as a result.

The school bears the cost of the mitigation. The health department has given out a few sub-grants over the years to support mitigation. The projects are intended to be demonstration projects to help local radon mitigators learn how to complete a radon mitigation project in a school building. As the size of the EPA grant has been reduced in the last few years from $130,0000 to $105,000 the funds available in this sub-grant have decreased from $10,000 to $5,000.