



Setting The Stage For A Radon Test

What is Radon?

Radon is radioactive gas from the decay of naturally occurring uranium in the soil. It is odorless, colorless and tasteless. The only way to know if you have elevated levels in the home is to test for it.

Why Test?

Because you care about your family. Radon is a known Class A human carcinogen and the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. One in 15 homes has elevated levels of radon.

Monitors

White Glove uses electronic monitors that measure radon in hourly increments. The number of radon monitors needed to properly test the home is based on the configuration, structure and square footage of the home. Monitors will be placed in the lowest structural areas suitable for occupancy in the home. For example:

Basement – 1 monitor

Basement & Crawl Space – 2 monitors

Basement, Crawl & Slab – 3 monitors

Slab only – 1 monitor (less than 2200 sq ft)

Slab & Crawl – 2 monitors

Interference

Touching, tampering, changing location(s) or turning the monitor(s) off is against the law and may result in criminal prosecution and/or fines. If a monitor is damaged while in the residence, replacement and/or repair fees will be incurred by the residents of the home. If the radon monitor is tampered with and/or closed house conditions are not met, the original fee will not be refunded and a re-test will be needed. The cost of re-testing may be assessed to the seller/occupant during the test period. The Illinois Emergency Division of Nuclear Safety has significant penalties for non-compliance with the above conditions as described in the IDNS Adopted Rule 32 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 422.

Results

Results are measured in pico curies (pCi/L.). If your result(s) is 4.0 pCi/L or more, the IDNS recommends you mitigate. If the result is elevated, the EPA strongly recommends mitigating your home. White Glove is mandated to disclose the results to our clients and the sellers of the home.

Closed-House Conditions

Short term test conditions were developed by the EPA and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Division of Nuclear Safety (IDNS) to provide standardized conditions under which a short-term radon test is to be performed. If these conditions are not followed, the radon measurement will not reflect the true radon level.

Closed-house conditions are required by Illinois State Law and are to be explained to the buyer/seller/seller's agent/listing agent and/or a designated representative and/or resident prior to a radon test. **In order for a short-term radon test to be valid, the State of Illinois requires closed house conditions to be maintained 12 hours BEFORE the test, during the 48 hour testing period and until the monitor(s) are retrieved by a Radon Technician.**

A summary of the *State of Illinois Closed House Conditions* are as follows:

- All external doors and windows must be kept closed except for normal entering and exiting.
- External-internal air exchange systems (other than a furnace or central air) must **not** be operated and their inlet closed (e.g., **exhaust fans, dryers, window air conditioners or whole house fans**).
- Heating, central air conditioning, bathroom fans and attic ventilators can be operated normally.
- Window fans must be removed or sealed.
- Fireplaces and wood burning stoves must **not** be used and their damper must be closed.
- If at any time during the testing period, winds exceed 30 miles per hour, the monitor will require an extended stay within the home.

Open windows and the use of equipment mentioned above (except for HVAC) may increase the negative pressure in the dwelling, which can raise the radon concentration and present a false positive. Controls will be in place during the test and the **test results will be ruled invalid if these closed-house conditions are not adhered to.**

Note: The seller/seller's representative will be required to sign a Radon Testing & Non-Interference Agreement prior to testing



White Glove Building Inspections

Office: 630.428.4555 ~ Text: 630.495.4555
www.WhiteGloveInspections.com

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

FOR A PROFESSIONAL INSPECTION



WHAT DO YOU DO AT AN INSPECTION?

Perform a visual, mechanical and structural inspection of the exterior and interior of the home/building that is accessible at the time of the inspection.

HOW LONG DOES THE INSPECTION LAST?

Typically, 2 to 3 hours, depending on the size, condition, age, and how many questions asked during the inspection. Client participation and questions should be encouraged.

ARE YOU LICENSED?

Yes, the Home Inspection industry is licensed; you are the "key" component to enforce this.

ARE YOU FULLY INSURED?

Professional Liability-Errors and Omissions, General Liability, Bonded.

DO ANY OF YOUR INSPECTORS BELONG TO A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION?

ASHI (American Society of Home Inspectors)
NAHI (National Association of Home Inspectors)
NACHI (National Association of Certified Home Inspectors)

ARE INSPECTIONS YOUR FULL-TIME PROFESSION?

Building inspections, education, professionalism, and quality should be the focus attainable through full time years of experience.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN BUSINESS?

Time = Experience = Knowledge

HOW MANY INSPECTIONS HAS THE COMPANY PERFORMED?

The more experience - the better inspection.

WHAT TYPE OF REPORT IS USED?

Reports come in a variety of formats: narrative, checklist, handwritten, computerized, and may include photos.

WHAT OTHER SERVICES DO YOU OFFER?

Radon & Mold Testing, Energy Audits, Blower Door Testing, New Construction Inspection / Walk throughs & Commercial Inspections, and E.I.F.S. Inspections - (Exterior Insulation Finishing System), Reserve Studies

DOES THE COMPANY MEET THE ABOVE CRITERIA?

Qualify the company for a quality, professional inspection that focuses on educating clients to make informed decisions and peace of mind about their purchase/sale.

SHOULD COST BE A DEFINITIVE FACTOR?

This is the largest asset clients will purchase and cost should not be the first concern; an experienced professional inspector and a quality inspection should be the deciding factors.

White Glove

Definition: Adj. Marked with special care or attention; meticulous

Residential & Commercial Inspections ~ Radon & Mold Testing ~ EIFS Inspections



Setting The Stage For A Home Inspection

Preparing the Buyer

The primary concern for the agent is preparing the buyer for the inspection. The scope of the inspection varies according to the style of home - single-family, townhome, condo, quad. For example: in a condo inspection, we inspect the interior only.

The buyer should be informed of the following:

- It is **highly recommended** that the buyer attend and walk through the home with the inspector. It is in their best interest to obtain first hand knowledge, gain insight and have their questions answered directly from the inspector at the time of the inspection.
- Our Inspectors are licensed by the Office of Banks & Real Estate in Illinois and perform inspections according to License Act 225 ILCS91 and ASHI (*American Society of Home Inspectors*) Standards and Ethics.
- Emphasize the clause about home inspections in the Real Estate Contract.
- A home inspection is a **visual** examination of the physical structure and systems within the home by a generalist (*i.e., a General Practitioner refers you to a specialist, as we may refer the buyer to a Structural Engineer*).
- A home inspection is a professional's opinion of the structure & components as of the day and time of the inspection. It's not a guarantee or warranty.
- Inform buyer and buyer's attorney of any environmental tests that are available. (*i.e., radon, mold, EIFS, lead*) and the needs for closed-house conditions prior to the test.
- The inspection helps buyers understand normal maintenance and what would be normal wear and tear of the home based on use and age.
- **The homebuyer should choose an inspector based on their:**
Experience, Professionalism and Customer Focus

Preparing the Seller

The agent should make sure the seller understands the scope of the inspection as follows:

- The inspector will be in all rooms in the home and will need access to the roof, attic, crawlspace, basement, etc. This may upset some sellers who will feel it is an invasion of privacy.
- Others may feel insulted that the buyer would want or need an inspector (*i.e., "Don't they trust us?"*).
- If at all possible, have the sellers out of the home. Although this may be difficult under certain circumstances, it can enable smoother dialogue with the buyer.
- Inform the seller of any environmental testing that may be conducted. (*i.e., radon, mold, lead, EIFS*)
- Inform the seller's agent and attorney of any environmental tests that may influence the 5 day time frame for the inspection.
- Inform your seller that a radon test is going to be conducted and that specific guidelines need to be followed, in brief:
 - 48 hour testing period
 - Closed – home conditions
 - No tampering with monitor(s)
 - No operation of dryer, whole house fan, fireplace damper
- **Have the sellers make it possible for the inspector to gain access to the following:**
 - Attic
 - Crawlspace
 - Garage
 - Any other rooms that may be difficult to enter due to finishes or obstructions.

Most of all, keep the lines of communication open between everyone concerned.

Preparing the Home for the Home Inspection

A home that is ready for an inspection is a home that has higher curb appeal; this home has a competitive edge. All routine maintenance should be completed prior to listing, not the home inspection. Here are six major areas of concern in regards to a home inspection.

1) Check major systems:

- Furnace, have it cleaned and serviced. (*This clearly shows that it has been maintained.*) Make sure the receipt(s) are out for display.
- Have the central air conditioning system charged in the summer months.
- Have the foundation cracks repaired, cracks showing moisture should be epoxy injected.
- Electrical System – Make sure the main panel is on, all knockouts are covered, and any non-professional wiring is replaced by code compliant work. Fix all damaged outlets, switches, and lights. (Typically, electrical items are easily repaired, but several items tend to have a cumulative effect.)
- Check with the city to see if the Romex wiring is up to code. The home inspector will make sure the buyers are aware of the presence of Romex.
- Have all plumbing leaks fixed, all damaged valves replaced, and make sure the toilet(s) are functioning properly.
- Have all flashing and roof shingles checked and repaired, if necessary.

2) Maintenance Work:

- Trim back trees and bushes
- Apply new caulk to exterior
- Clean gutters, Add downspout extensions
- Replace any rotten wood trim
- Remove any peeling paint and paint wood trim
- Replace caulk in bathrooms at tub, re-grout where needed
- Re-grade at exterior
- Install or replace furnace filter
- Have chimney professionally cleaned
- Reseal Driveway

3) Details:

- Repair leaking faucets and traps
- Tighten loose doorknobs and hardware
- Replace damaged screens
- Replace broken glass
- Replace burnt out light bulbs
- Secure loose railings
- Patch all small holes in drywall
- Repair loose wallpaper

4) Safety:

- Install/check all smoke detectors in home. Requirements vary, but one on each level should be present. For new construction, detectors are needed in each bedroom as well.
- Install carbon monoxide detector.
- Install ground fault circuit interrupters in wet areas, such as bathrooms, kitchens, garages, exterior outlets or any other potential risk areas.
- Keep/remove flammable products away from furnace and hot water heater.
- Have basement foundation, egress, and windows clear.
- Update door lock hardware.

5) Cosmetic Improvements:

- Keep lawn mowed and picked up.
- Clean windows and power wash siding and trim.
- Replace thermal windows that have broken seals.
- Keep kitchen and baths clean, since buyers tend to scrutinize these areas.

6) Information:

- Have all appliance receipts, service records, and warranties ready for inspection.
- Information on age of major components such as furnace, water heater, roof, etc.
- Warranty information on components.
- Current heating, water, and electric bills.
- Information on any and all remodeling, such as date of remodel, permit for work, etc.
- For homes with well and septic tank systems, date of last service is beneficial.

Please take the time to walk through the home and garage with the seller and point out these six areas of concern. The above is only a generalized beginning list.



Handling the Outcome of the Inspection

If all of the prior items have been met, it would be likely that any negative inspection feedback would be minimized or non-existent. Just in case, inform the buyer that of all the items found, only life safety and habitability are areas that should be addressed. Reinforce the Real Estate Contract and what is and isn't part of an inspection. **If the buyers are aware of this prior to the inspection, then their expectation should not change.**

Make sure that the items the buyer is concerned about are **not** the items that were known prior to the inspection, such as cracks on the sidewalk that the buyer walked on to get into the house and was reflected in its' selling price.