



## **Radon in the home**

The Health Protection Agency (formerly the National Radiological Protection Board - NRPB) produces maps of the UK indicating areas where radon levels may exceed the Government's Action Level of 200 Becquerels per cubic metre of air.

In South Norfolk, **no** sampling has ever detected levels even approaching the Action Level. The average recorded level in South Norfolk is 31 Bq m<sup>-3</sup>.

Based on statistical probability the information from the NRPB is that the probability of radon in homes being above the Action Level within South Norfolk is between 1-3%, which means a declaration of radon affected areas in two 5km squares of the ordnance survey grid within the South Norfolk Council District area. To reiterate, this declaration is based on statistical probability and the reality is that no sampling has ever detected radon above the Action Level.

Radon is a natural radioactive gas, which decays into other radioactive species, all of which cause human exposure to radiation.

Exposure in the home can come from the minute amounts of uranium present in all earth materials such as rocks, soils, brick and concrete.

People living all their lives at the Action Level run a **3%** risk of developing lung cancer. On average, about 1 in 30 people exposed for a lifetime at the Action Level would be expected to develop lung cancer.

Even in affected areas most homes have low levels of radon and high levels can generally be reduced at fairly moderate cost. Concern about radon should not therefore influence your choice of home.

Further advice is given in the booklet *Radon: A guide for homebuyers and sellers* published by the Government. Once you have moved, you can obtain a measurement for a **small fee**. (£37.37 including VAT **as at January 2006**) The test is confidential, the significance of the result is explained and advice is provided on how to reduce high levels.

Further information may be obtained from :

**Health Protection Agency  
Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards  
Radiation Protection Division  
Chilton  
Didcot  
Oxon  
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<http://www.hpa.org.uk/radiation>

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