

Why Jeffco Radon Mitigation Matters for Your Home and Health

If you live in Jefferson County, Missouri, you have probably heard about radon gas. It is a natural, odorless, radioactive gas that seeps up from the soil into homes. Over the years, I have worked with many homeowners in Arnold, Festus, High Ridge, and Hillsboro who were surprised to learn their house had elevated radon levels. The good news is that effective jeffco radon mitigation is available and can make a real difference in your indoor air quality.

Radon is not something you can see or smell, so it is easy to ignore. But the health risks are serious. The EPA estimates that radon causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States. That makes it the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. For nonsmokers, radon is the number one cause. That is why testing and, if needed, mitigation are so important for any home in this region.

Why Jefferson County Homes Are at Risk

Jefferson County sits on a geological formation that can produce radon. The soil and rock beneath many homes in this area contain uranium, which decays into radon gas. As the gas moves up through the ground, it can enter your home through cracks in foundation, gaps around pipes, and other openings. Once inside, it can build up to unhealthy levels, especially in basements and lower floors.

I have seen homes in Arnold where the radon level was over 20 picocuries per liter (pCi/L), which is five times the EPA action level of 4 pCi/L. In one case, a family had been living with high radon for years without knowing it. They only found out when they decided to sell the house and the buyer required a radon test. That is when they called a professional for testing and later for mitigation. The process was straightforward, but the peace of mind was huge.

What Radon Testing Involves

Before any mitigation work begins, you need accurate testing. The most common method is a short-term test, which lasts two to seven days. A small charcoal canister or continuous monitor is placed in the lowest livable area of your home. After the test period, the device is sent to a lab for analysis. For real estate transactions, this is often required as part of a home inspection.

Many homeowners in Festus and High Ridge have asked me whether they can do the test themselves or need a professional. The short answer is that do-it-yourself kits are available and can give you a rough idea. But for reliable results, especially when a seller disclosure or

real estate disclosure is involved, a certified tester is the better choice. Professionals know where to place the monitor, how to avoid interference from windows or fans, and how to interpret the results correctly.

Understanding Radon Mitigation

If your test shows radon levels above 4 pCi/L, the next step is mitigation. The goal is to reduce the concentration to below that threshold. The most effective method for most homes is sub-slab depressurization. This involves installing a pipe through the foundation floor into the gravel or soil beneath. A fan-powered system then creates suction that pulls radon gas from under the house and vents it safely above the roofline.

I have seen this work in homes of all ages and styles. In an older home in Hillsboro with a stone foundation, the installation required careful sealing of the basement floor and walls. In a newer house in Arnold with a poured concrete slab, the process was simpler. In both cases, the radon levels dropped from above 10 pCi/L to below 2 pCi/L within a few days. The fan-powered system is quiet and runs continuously, using very little electricity.

Radon mitigation is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Sometimes the foundation needs additional sealing. In other cases, the sub-slab system alone is enough. A good mitigation contractor will evaluate your home and design a system that fits your specific situation. That is why working with a local expert, such as Air Sense Environmental, can be helpful. They know the soil conditions, common construction types, and local building codes in Jefferson County.

The Role of Real Estate Transactions

If you are buying or selling a home in Jefferson County, radon is often part of the conversation. Missouri law does not require a seller disclosure specifically for radon, but many real estate contracts include a radon test as a contingency. A buyer can request a short-term test during the inspection period. If the result is high, the buyer may ask for mitigation before closing.

I recall a transaction in Festus where the seller had never tested for radon. The buyer's home inspection included a radon test, and it came back at 6.5 pCi/L. The buyer was concerned about the health risks and wanted the seller to pay for mitigation. After some negotiation, the seller agreed to have a professional system installed. The cost was around \$1,500, which was a small price to close the deal and protect the new family's health. Both parties were satisfied.

For sellers, it can be smart to test before listing. If you already know your radon level and have taken steps to fix it, you can include that information in your seller disclosure. This can make your home more attractive to buyers and avoid surprises later. Some homeowners in High Ridge have told me that their pre-listing mitigation paid off by speeding up the sale and preventing a price reduction.

Health Risks and Long-Term Considerations

The connection between radon and lung cancer is well established. When you breathe in radon gas, the radioactive particles can damage the cells lining your lungs. Over many years of exposure, that damage increases your risk of developing lung cancer. The risk is higher for smokers and for people who spend a lot of time in basements or lower levels of their home.

Children are also more vulnerable because their lungs are still developing and they breathe faster than adults. If you have young children who play in the basement, you should take radon seriously. Testing is the only way to know if there is a problem. And if there is, [jeffco radon mitigation](#) can lower the risk for your whole family.

I have met homeowners who hesitated to invest in mitigation because they were not sure it would work. But in my experience, a properly designed and installed system almost always brings radon levels down to safe levels. The key is to use a qualified contractor who follows EPA guidelines and tests the results after installation. Many systems come with a manometer, which is a small gauge that shows the fan is working. You can check it once a month to ensure the system is operating correctly.

Practical Tips for Homeowners

If you are considering radon testing or mitigation, here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Test during the heating season when windows are closed and the house is sealed. That gives the most accurate picture of your year-round exposure.
- If you do a short-term test, keep the house closed for at least 12 hours before and during the test. That means no opening windows or running window fans.
- Do not place the test in a bathroom, kitchen, laundry room, or hallway near an exterior door. These areas have higher ventilation and can give falsely low readings.
- After mitigation, retest to confirm the system is working. Most contractors include a follow-up test as part of the service.
- If you move into a home with an existing mitigation system, check the manometer and listen for the fan. If it is not running, call a professional to inspect it.

Why Local Expertise Matters

Radon mitigation is not a DIY project. It involves working with electrical wiring, drilling through concrete, and sealing foundation cracks. A mistake can leave your home with higher radon levels or create other issues like moisture problems. That is why I always recommend hiring a certified radon mitigation specialist who knows the local conditions in Jefferson County.

Companies like Air Sense Environmental have experience with homes in Arnold, Festus, High Ridge, and Hillsboro. They understand the specific soil types, foundation styles, and climate factors that affect radon entry. They can also help with real estate disclosure forms and coordinate with home inspectors if you are in the middle of a sale.

Living in Jefferson County offers many advantages: good schools, beautiful parks, and a strong community. But radon is a hidden risk that should not be ignored. Whether you are buying a home, selling one, or just want to protect your family, testing and mitigation are smart investments. The peace of mind that comes from knowing your home is safe from radon is well worth the effort.

If you have not tested your home yet, consider doing it soon. Radon levels can change over time as the soil shifts and your home settles. Even if a previous test was low, a new test a few years later might show a different result. Regular testing every two years is a good habit, especially after major renovations or earthquakes.

In the end, jeffco radon mitigation is about taking control of your home environment. It is a practical step that reduces a serious health risk and adds value to your property. With the right information and a qualified professional, you can make your home a safer place for everyone who lives there.