

## **Radon Testing FAQ**

### **July 21, 2023**

#### **What testing was done and why?**

The City of Greater Sudbury participated in a study conducted by the Occupational Cancer Research Centre to measure radon levels in small to medium-sized businesses and public buildings in Ontario. As part of the study, 45 radon detectors were placed in 18 City buildings from December 2022 to March 2023. The City received the results on July 18, 2023.

#### **What were the study results?**

Results showed that one location – the west side of the basement at the Onaping Community Centre – had a radon reading of 263 becquerels per cubic metre (Bq/m<sup>3</sup>). This is higher than the Canadian guideline for indoor dwellings, which is 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>.

The other 44 radon detectors, including three others within the Onaping Community Centre, had levels that fell within the Canadian guidelines. Five of those showed readings between 100-200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>, and the others were less than 100 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>.

#### **What do these results mean?**

The Radiation Safety Institute of Canada has indicated there is no immediate danger to past or current users of the area and no need to evacuate or stop using the area. This level of exposure is very unlikely to elevate the risk of lung cancer.

The higher the radon concentration, the sooner remedial measures should be undertaken. For levels between 200 and 600 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>, Health Canada recommends that steps be taken to reduce the radon level within two years. In an abundance of caution, the City is undertaking remedial measures immediately.

#### **What steps is the City taking?**

While there are a number of groups who use Onaping Community Centre, community use of the basement area is limited. Although not required based on guidance from the Radiation Safety Institute of Canada, we are closing the basement while we begin remediation work.

Mitigation measures like ventilation improvements are being explored to bring the levels of radon within the Canadian standard. The area will be retested once mitigation measures have been implemented.

Even though the five areas that tested between 100-200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> fall within the Canadian guidelines, the City will proactively explore mitigation measures in an attempt to reduce levels as much as possible. These areas will remain open.

We will continue to provide updates throughout this process and will let residents and user groups know once the Onaping Community Centre basement has reopened.

**What is radon and where can I find more information?**

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive material that is produced during a decay process from the radioactive element uranium, which can be found globally in soil, bedrock and mineral deposits. The Greater Sudbury area is said to be within the elevated radon hazard range.

Here are some reputable sources to learn more:

- [Health Canada](#)
- [Government of Ontario](#) – radon in the workplace
- [EvictRadon](#) – a national radon study involving university-based researchers from across Canada

**I spent time in this area of the Onaping Community Centre and have questions or concerns.****Who can I talk to?**

The only affected area of the Onaping Community Centre is the west side of the basement. The three other detectors that were placed within the facility had levels that fell within the Canadian guidelines. If you spent time in this area of the basement and have questions or concerns, please contact 311.