

# MEDIA INFORMATION

## Eolas do na Meáin

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil



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### **EPA welcomes inclusion of questions relating to radon gas in Law Society of Ireland’s revised conveyancing documents**

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**27<sup>th</sup> February 2017:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today welcomed the decision of the Law Society of Ireland to include three questions relating to radon gas in their 2017 Conditions of Sale document used during the sale of homes.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas linked to lung cancer. It is formed in the ground by the radioactive decay of uranium which is present in all rocks and soils. Radon is an invisible gas with no smell or taste, therefore it can only be measured with special detectors.

“We are really pleased to have radon gas highlighted in this manner” said Stephanie Long, Senior Scientist with the EPA. “We have been campaigning for radon to be considered when homes are bought and sold for some time. Radon is a serious public health issue so raising the question of radon when a home is being sold is an important step in reducing the risk. Radon is linked to lung cancer and the risk of this cancer can be significant where radon levels are elevated”.

Mr Joe Thomas, Law Society of Ireland, said,

“The Law Society is aware that radon gas can accumulate in building to levels which can be a risk to health. With a view to protecting the public and prospective homebuyers, we have included radon specifically in the new edition of the Conditions of Sale document to assist in heightening awareness of the dangers of this radioactive gas.”

The revised document means that the vendor’s solicitor will ask the vendor the following questions:

1. Has a radon test been carried out?
2. If a radon test has been carried out, please supply the report.
3. Has any action to reduce radon levels been undertaken?

This information will then be passed on to the buyer's solicitor. If the buyer has any concerns their solicitor will advise that they get expert advice. There is however, no requirement for a homeowner to test or remediate their home for radon before selling it.

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Homes in some parts of the country are more likely to have a radon problem. These parts of the country are called High Radon Areas. If you are buying a home you can check out the [EPAs interactive map](#) to see whether it is in a High Radon Area, but the only way to know for sure is to test because each house is different.

If your new home has not already been tested, the EPA recommends that you test it after you have moved into the home. This is because radon levels in unoccupied homes can be significantly higher than when the home is occupied.

Testing for radon is very straightforward; however, the test takes 3 months, therefore the EPA recommend that you test your home for radon well in advance of putting your home on the market. The EPA provides a list of registered radon measurement services on their website [www.radon.ie](http://www.radon.ie). In the event that your radon levels are above the reference level of 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup>, reducing the levels of radon in your home is also straightforward. The EPA also provides a list of registered remediation services on [www.radon.ie](http://www.radon.ie).

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#### **Notes to Editor:**

**National Radon Control Strategy:** The National Radon Control Strategy was launched in February 2014 by the then Minister for the Environment, Mr Phil Hogan, T.D.. The Strategy aims to tackle the serious public health problem caused by radon gas and to reduce associated lung cancer cases.

The cross Government group that oversees the implementation of the Strategy is made up of representatives from the following: Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (Chair), Department of Health, Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, Department of Education and Skills, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, Health Service Executive, Health and Safety Authority, Geological Survey of Ireland, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland and the County and City Managers' Association.

**Radon:** Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils. It has no smell, colour or taste and can only be detected using special detectors. Outdoors, radon quickly dilutes to harmless concentrations but when it enters an enclosed space, such as a house or other building, it can accumulate to unacceptably high concentrations.

**Information about Radon:** Detailed information on radon and its risks, including information on how to get your home or workplace tested for radon is available on the EPA's website [www.radon.ie](http://www.radon.ie) or via freefone 1800 300 600.

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