

February 1st, 2016

Skeena Queen Charlotte Regional District
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To: Skeena Queen Charlotte Regional District

A Radon Testing Project conducted by Shared Services BC (SSBC) and in partnership with the Public Service Agency and the BC Lung Association will be completed in the fall and winter of 2015/2016 in buildings owned and leased by SSBC. The communities of Masset, Port Clements, Queen Charlotte City, and Sandspit contain at least one government building that will be part of the SSBC Radon Testing Project.

BACKGROUND

In 2007 Health Canada established a health guideline of 200 Bq/m³, above which action is recommended to reduce occupant exposure levels. There is no legislative requirement to test for radon in government buildings. SSBC is proactively initiating radon testing to protect occupant health. The Radon Testing Project will begin in a sample of government owned and leased residential and commercial buildings to test radon levels and to determine any requirement for mitigation.

WHAT IS RADON?

Radon is a colourless, odourless, tasteless gas produced by the radioactive decay of naturally occurring uranium. Uranium-bearing rocks and soils decay into radon gas, which migrates from underground to the surface of the earth where it is normally diluted with fresh air to very low concentrations. However, radon can also find its way into any building where the foundation is in direct contact with the soil. Indoors, radon can get trapped and accumulate to higher concentrations.

WHY IS RADON A CONCERN?

Radon has been shown to cause lung cancer over many years of exposure and is estimated to be the second leading cause of lung cancer, after smoking. The only known health impact from radon exposure is lung cancer.

IS YOUR COMMUNITY AT RISK?

Radon is found in all regions of British Columbia. Buildings included in the SSBC Radon Testing Project were not selected based on any known risk; rather, the project aimed to include a mix of building types in order to evaluate best practices in radon testing and mitigation.

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions or concerns regarding the SSBC Radon Testing Project please contact Mark Donaldson, SSBC Radon Testing Project Manager at 250.952.9330. For general information and resources on radon please visit the BC Lung Association's website at www.radonaware.ca or call 250.686.1597 and request the RadonAware Manager.