Alta-Aurelia Community Schools Are Proactive and Safe with Radon

Recently, the Alta-Aurelia Community School District completed the process of testing its Alta Elementary and High School building(s) for radon. We recently received good news: Our test results came back below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) advised radon action level of 4.0 pCi/L. This means we now have peace of mind that our students, staff and community are learning in spaces that are as safe as possible from radon.

What is radon and why does it matter? Radon gas cannot be seen, smelled or tasted, and moves upward through cracks and other openings in the foundations of buildings from the soil under a building. In the United States, radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers.

The State of Iowa requires radon testing at least once every 5 years for all Iowa public school attendance centers, licensed preschools and licensed child care centers.

To learn how to accurately do the initial radon testing ourselves, we saved taxpayer dollars by receiving training from the School Radon Training & Support System facilitated by Energy Association of Iowa Schools (EAIS). If we would have found elevated radon in our school, EAIS would have coached us through the process of fixing it. EAIS also helped us proactively place our school building on a multi-year rotating radon test schedule so we can continue to ensure radon safety in the future.

For most students and staff, research suggests that schools are actually the *second* largest contributor to radon exposure. *The home is likely to be the most significant source of radon exposure.* Please test your home for radon and if necessary, take action to reduce the risk of lung cancer by reducing elevated radon concentrations.

If you have questions regarding radon testing for the Alta-Aurelia Community Schools, please feel free to contact Denny Olhausen, superintendent, at 712-200-2000. More information regarding residential radon testing can be found at www.epa.gov/radon.