

January 2017

New Jersey's Outreach Partnerships Increase the Radon Testing Rate

What was the problem/situation?

Radon is estimated to be the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, responsible for over 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Radon is a gas that can't be seen and doesn't have an odor, so it is important homes are tested in order to detect dangerously high levels of radon. Most cases of radon-related lung cancer can be prevented, and homes with high levels of radon can be mitigated to reduce the amount of radon in the home to safe levels. As of 2016, 30.5% of homes in NJ had been tested for radon. There is no mandatory requirement for testing homes for radon in the state, and nearly six million residents live in moderate- to high-risk areas for radon.



How was Tracking involved?

Because the testing of homes in NJ is voluntary, outreach to residents is a key factor in increasing radon testing rates. The New Jersey Environmental Public Health Tracking Project (NJ Tracking) conducted an awareness campaign to coincide with Radon Action Month throughout January 2017. NJ Tracking partnered with the state's Radon Program within the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to promote radon testing and mitigation. NJ Tracking and the DEP Radon Program worked together to mail radon information to over 500 municipalities, issue a press release, had more than 50 posts on social media,

produce a podcast, participate in a radio interview, and gain the support of the Governor who issued a proclamation in support of testing homes for radon.

What action was taken to resolve the problem?

Due to the extensive outreach campaign, NJ Tracking and partners saw an increase in web traffic, social media interactions, and phone calls to the NJ Radon Program. Most importantly, the state’s radon testing database

showed nearly a 40% increase in homes tested for radon during January 2017 when compared to January 2016. By the end of 2017, cumulative [radon testing rates](#) had increased to 32.5% of all NJ homes. NJ Tracking and the NJDEP Radon Program partnered again for Radon Action Month in January 2018, and plan to continue this annual collaboration. Through increased testing and mitigation, New Jersey residents will experience less exposure to radon and reduce their risk of lung cancer.

