

Homeowner Radon Test Guide

A step-by-step guide to placing a long-term radon test kit in your home for accurate results.

Why Test?

Radon is invisible, odourless, and tasteless — the only way to know your home's level is to test for it. New Brunswick sits on some of the highest radon-bearing bedrock in Canada, and roughly 1 in 4 homes in the province test above Health Canada's action level of 200 Bq/m³.

Choosing a Test

- **Short-term test (a few days to a few weeks):** a quick snapshot, useful for real estate deadlines. Less accurate than a long-term test, since radon levels shift with the seasons.
- **Long-term test (3+ months, ideally through winter):** Health Canada's recommended standard. Gives a true average of what you're breathing year-round.
- **Look for C-NRPP approval.** A kit or technician certified under Canada's National Radon Proficiency Program meets the standard Health Canada itself points to.

Where to Place Your Test Kit

- Place it in the lowest lived-in level of your home — usually the basement, or the lowest floor where you spend at least 4 hours a day.
- Position it at least 20 cm (8 in) from any wall, away from drafts, windows, exterior doors, and heat sources such as vents or fireplaces.
- Set it roughly 50 cm to 2 m (20 in–6.5 ft) above the floor — about chest height.
- Avoid closets, kitchens, bathrooms, and areas with high humidity or direct airflow.

During the Test

- Keep windows and exterior doors closed as much as normal daily life allows — don't seal the house artificially, just live normally.
- Don't move or disturb the kit once it's placed.
- Note the exact start date and time; you'll need this to calculate the test duration.

After the Test

Follow the kit's return instructions promptly — most long-term kits are mailed to a lab (in New Brunswick, this is commonly RPC in Fredericton) for analysis. Results typically take 1–3 weeks to come back.

If your result comes back at or above 200 Bq/m³, Health Canada recommends taking action to reduce it. A reading below that level doesn't mean zero risk, since there's no fully "safe" level of radon — but it does mean no urgent action is required.

Retesting

Retest every two years, and always retest after any renovation that touches your foundation, changes your home's ventilation, or after installing a mitigation system, to confirm it's working as intended.