

Radon In Georgia

www.fcs.uga.edu/housing 1-800-ASK-UGA1
www.dca.state.ga.us 1-800-359-4663
www.southface.org 1-800-765-0037
www.epa.gov/iaq/radon 1-800-767-7236

Quarterly Newsletter and Outreach Report—April - June 2009

The University of Georgia (UGA) College of Family & Consumer Sciences Radon Education Program is primarily funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Partners include UGA Cooperative Extension and Southface Energy Institute.

Over 1,000 Students Reached in Three Counties



Youth Middle School Teacher, Wendy Brooks, and 6th grade class

During April and May, Radon Educator Becky Chenhall presented 25 radon school programs to more than 1,000 science students at five middle schools and high schools in three counties: Walton, Jackson and Oconee. Ms. Chenhall strongly encourages students to take the radon message home to family members.

Ms. Wendy Brooks, Youth Middle School Teacher, invites Becky Chenhall to present radon programs to her classes

each year. Ms. Chenhall begins her school programs with EPA’s “Green Baby Steps” TV PSA, then uses a PowerPoint presentation that includes where radon originates, a radon map of Georgia, radon health effects, testing for radon, radon mitigation, and ends with promotion of the radon poster contest. She also plays several samples of new EPA radio PSA’s with varied musical backgrounds from contemporary to gospel. Students enjoy voting on two of their favorites. The Kids PSA is overwhelmingly the number one choice, with country, Latin, and gospel not far behind.

NEWS & PROGRESS REPORTS

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Radon on the Road



Edda Cotto-Rivera and Ines Beltran often team up for large events like Douglas County Extension's Home Efficiency Fair in May. Kevin Livingston, Douglas County Agriculture Agent, designed the event to showcase resources available to Douglas County Homeowners to help them use energy and water more efficiently.

In May Ines Beltran and Edda Cotto-Rivera shared radon information at the Feria de La Mujer Latina in Santa Fe Mall. This health fair targets Hispanic women, offering free health screening for diabetes, blood pressure, bone density, and more. Many are interested in learning about Radon and most request a radon kit to test their home. It is exciting to know that the



Edda and Ines show exhibit visitors how to use the radon test kit they receive to test their homes.

Hispanic community is hearing about this dangerous radioactive gas through UGA Cooperative Extension.



Ines shares a radon test kit with Hambee, the HoneyBaked Ham mascot.

Also in May, Gwinnett County held a Wellness Fair in the Justice and Administration Center in Lawrenceville, GA. More than 2,000 county employees participated in this fair that offered free health services to employees. Though county employees had access to Radon information on the county's intranet system, many visited the Radon exhibit and received free radon kits to their homes.

Radon on the Road

Edda Cotto-Rivera was a special guest speaker for Project IDEAL, a monthly support group for Hispanic adults with diabetes. Seven participants learned that Radon is indeed a problem in North Georgia

In May **Edda Cotto-Rivera** presented radon information at a Town Hall Meeting, held by Cobb County Commissioner Tim Lee. Participants asked and received

answers to questions about radon and received radon test kits to test their homes. One participant, a Cobb County resident, was surprised to discover she had misconceptions about radon and her house. She took what she learned

and shared it with her neighborhood association and helped distribute 16 test kits to her neighbors. Way to go Stephanie!

Cotto-Rivera participated in DeKalb Commissioner Larry Johnson's Town Hall Meeting in June. Other commissioners and community leaders attended the meeting which focused on having a "green county." Edda plans to go to similar meetings and hopes more people will become interested in learning about radon and its related health risks.



Participants at the April Project IDEAL meeting were proud to receive radon kits to test their homes.



Cobb Co. Commissioner Tom Lee & Edda Cotto-Rivera

Radon on the Road



Becky Chenhall helps Green County Seniors to navigate the EPA publication, "A Citizen's Guide to Radon." She also

Vivian Evans, Greene County Seniors Director, invited Radon Educator **Becky Chenhall** to do a radon presentation for the Greene County Seniors. Becky placed the small radon exhibit board at the entry for participants to view prior to the program. After a short presentation entitled "What is Radon? How Does It Enter Our Homes, and Radon Health Effects," Becky demonstrates how to test with an expired kit. Because this was a senior group, Becky spoke with each person individually about testing before providing a complimentary test kit, explaining in greater detail how to use the kit. Many had never heard of radon, but all were very interested. Approximately 45 people attended the program.

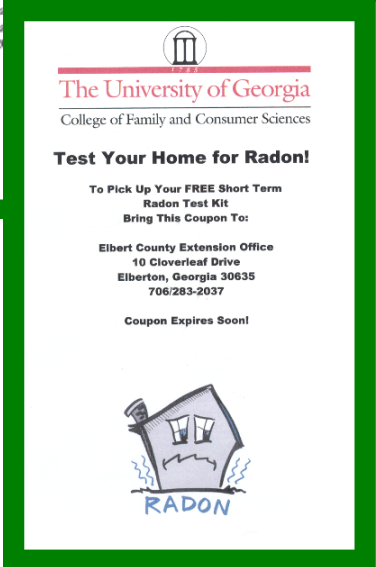
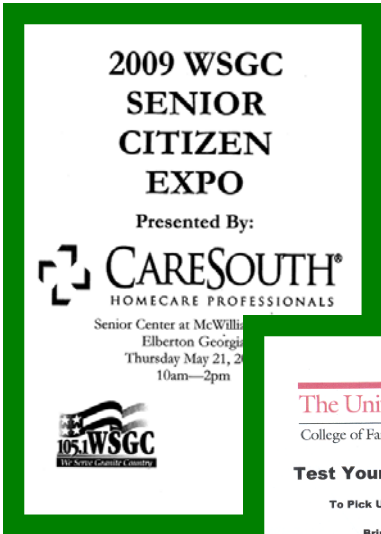


Radon on the Road



The Senior Adult Group at Chestnut Mountain Presbyterian Church paid close attention during a program presented by **Ginger Bennett** in April. Three of the 54 participants are shown registering for the dinner program .

Christa Campbell shares radon information in many different ways: The 2009 WSCG Senior Citizen Expo was held on May 21, 2009, at the Senior Center. **Christa** provided a Radon exhibit and distributed coupons to pick up a free test kit at the Elbert County Extension Office. Sixty-one people visited the exhibit.



Christa Campbell took her Radon exhibit to the McDuffie Co. Health Fair in Thomson, GA on April 18, 2009. She distributed coupons for a free test kit redeemable at the McDuffie Co. Extension Office and shared the danger of breathing radon with 57 exhibit visitors.



Radon In Print

PARENT PAGE



Summer Camp!



The mission of Georgia 4-H is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. We strive to teach 4-H members our mission through our essential elements in every activity we do. The essential elements that we exemplify are generosity, mastery, independence and belonging.

Growing Up Green!

The 2008-2009 Annual 4-H Awards Banquet will be held on Friday, May 8th. All competitive 4-H'ers, certified volunteers, donors, teachers and elected officials are invited to attend. A dance will follow the awards ceremony. For more information about the banquet please call the Extension Office at 706-283-2037. Invitations will be sent.



The Elbert County 4-H Livestock Show Team is currently looking for kids interested in showing livestock. If you or your child has an interest, please contact Clay Talton at the Elbert County Extension Office 706-283-2037.



Radon

The New Radon Campaign released by the EPA is the Green Sox Campaign. It is to remind each of us to make sure the air we are breathing in our home is healthy. The campaign reminds us to test our homes or build radon resistant homes. The only way to know if the air you breathe at home is healthy is to test it for radon. Radon is an odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas. Though you can not smell it, see it, or taste it; radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Test your home today! To pick up a free radon test kit, come to the Elbert County Extension Office. If you have not tested your home, test it now.

Cooking

If you are interested in learning to cook or competing in District Project Achievement in a cooking project, sign-up for Cooking with Christa this summer. Watch for additional information in your Summer Activities flyer your child will be bringing home in May.



Clay Talton, County Extension Coordinator
 Lauren Dye, 4-H Extension Agent
 Christa Campbell, FACS Agent
 Valencía Thornton, Program Assistant
 Felicity Holland, Program Assistant
 Christine Cunningham, Secretary
 10 Cloverleaf Drive, Elberton, GA 30635
 Phone: 706-283-2037 Fax: 706-283-2038

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

Christa Campbell placed a short radon article in the Elbert County 4-H Parent Page shown here. Parents of 4-H'ers who attended a talent show at the Elbert County Extension Office on April 24, 2009 went home with The Parent Newsletter shown at left. Sixty-five newsletters were distributed.

Hall County MAGAZINE

MAY/JUNE 2009

Community Highlights



The Hall Community Bank Celebrates Five Years of Service in Gainesville

The Hall Community Bank is proud to be celebrating five years of service in Gainesville. After merging with the Buckhead Community Family of Banks in 2007, The Hall Community Bank continues to expand their services in the north metro Atlanta area.

In addition to expanding their products and services, the Hall Community Bank remains at the forefront of their community involvement. Through their work with the Gainesville State College Foundation, they help talented local students receive scholarships. They also sponsor the Alumni Golf Open, and in 2007, helped the group raise over \$22,000.

Spout Springs Branch Radon Program

On May 12th and 14th, Ginger Bennett of the Hall County Cooperative Extension Service will present, *Radon: The Health Hazard with a Simple Solution* at the Spout Springs Branch at 6:00 p.m. in Meeting Room A. Radon is a cancer-causing natural radioactive gas that is odorless, invisible and tasteless. It can easily enter our homes through the foundation or through well water. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. It is the second leading cause of lung cancer in America and claims the lives of nearly 22,000 people each year, 600 of them in Georgia.

Classes are free of charge and open to the public. You will learn how to prevent and reduce the entry of Radon in your home.

To register for the classes, contact Al List at 770-532-3311, ext. 191.

"Bowling for Kids"

Celebrity Event With ATLANTA FALCONS Players, Former Players, Coaches & Cheerleaders

Wednesday, May 20, 2009
 Check-in at 5:30 PM
 Tournament begins at 6:00 PM

Oasis Bowling Center
 1601 Horizon Pkwy
 Buford, Georgia 30508

Challenged Child and Friends, Inc.
 For more information or to reserve a lane for sponsorship Call Gail Schneider at 770-535-8372 ext 309 or email gail@challengedchild.org.



Rock in the Spring with Mid Life Crisis

to Benefit Challenged Child and Friends
 Saturday, May 2nd
 Brenau Amphitheater • Gates open at 6pm

Tickets \$20 in advance • \$25 at the door
 To reserve a table or for more information call Gail Schneider at 770-535-8372 ext 309 or email gail@challengedchild.org.

Purchase tickets at Challenged Child and Friends, Green's Grocery, the Crystal Plate and www.challengedchild.org.

Bring a picnic and your favorite beverages
 Food available from Turstile Deli
 Rain Location: Brenau Gymnasium

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Radon In Print

The Times

Your news. Your Times. | gainesvilletimes.com

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

MONDAY
JUNE 22, 2009

50 CENTS

Educator says radon common in Ga. homes

Tests available for
cancer-causing gas

BY MELISSA WEINMAN
mweinman@gainesvilletimes.com

Though radon may sound like something from another planet, it's actually a dangerous substance found throughout Hall County.

Radon is a naturally occurring gas that is a product of the decay of uranium.

"We've gotten enough data to know where some problematic areas are in Hall County," said Ginger Bennett, a radon educator with the University of Georgia's Radon Education Program.

Bennett said radon can come from soil and rocks and though it is found all over the U.S., it is common to North Georgia.

"If your house sits on dirt, it's most likely a question of how much, not a question of if you have radon," Bennett said.

Exposure to high levels of radon is known to cause lung cancer.

"It is the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers," Bennett said.

In 2007, officials estimate more than 800 people in Georgia died of cancer caused by radon exposure, though there is no definitive way to know what caused the cancer.

"Of the Southern region, Georgia has the highest number of deaths believed attributable to radon," Bennett said.

Tests are available at the county extension office to determine if a home has a high level of radon gas. If a test comes back with high results, Bennett said homeowners should consider installing a ventilation system.

Currently, there are few areas that have

■ Please see RADON, 3A

'Of the Southern region, Georgia has the highest number of deaths believed attributable to radon.'

Ginger Bennett
Radon educator, University of Georgia

Two for the Price of One!

An interview with Melissa Weinman in June brought front page exposure for the Georgia Radon Education Program. When Gainesville Times readers discovered the second part of the article was nowhere to be found, they complained—loudly! As a result, The Times ran the complete article again two days later.

2C

Wednesday, June 24, 2009

The Times, Gainesville, Georgia

gainesvilletimes.com

LOCAL/STATE

Expert: Radon common in North Georgia homes

Extension offices have tests for cancer-causing gas

Editor's note: Due to an editor's error, only part of the article about radon on 1A in Monday's Times was included in that edition. The article is being rerun in its entirety.

BY MELISSA WEINMAN
mweinman@gainesvilletimes.com

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Currently, there are few areas that have addressed the problem.

"I do know there are some movements nationally to put in some building code and regulations that would require all houses to be tested in a real estate transaction," Bennett said. "But that's a long way off."

Bennett will be speaking to the Hall County Board of Commissioners July 20 about radon in the area.

Hall County Fire Marshal Scott Cagle said radon is not the only odorless, colorless gas that could be present in homes.

"When it comes to poisonings, they call carbon monoxide the silent killer," Cagle said. "That's why that carbon monoxide alarm is so important."

People need to be aware of carbon monoxide, which is emitted from things like cars and gas grills, Cagle said.

Cagle said grills should be operated at least 10 feet from a home to lower the risk of exposure, and cars should not be left running in a garage.

Hall County Fire Services gives out free alarms, which will detect dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

Quarterly Radon Outreach Report

Program Contacts & Media Impressions for April—June 2009

PROGRAM CONTACTS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert	Walton	South-face	Totals
Programs, Meetings, Classes	7	17	4	1	32	14	75
Participants	131	399	152	7	1,561	241	2,491
Materials Distributed	356	616	52	7	220	0	1,251
Exhibits or Events	6	2	6	2	5	6	27
Participants	466	200	715	118	12,900	1,197	15,596
Materials Distributed	1,060	300	192	154	1,000	0	2,706
Total Contacts	396	62	52	11	27	1,177	1,725
Medical Professionals	11	2	0	0	2	0	15
Homebuilders	1	3	0	0	1	1,145	1,150
Realtors	9	6	1	0	24	32	72
Direct Consumer Contacts	375	51	51	11	140	57	685
Radon Test Kits Distributed	287	294	332	57	465	0	1,435
Test Results Received	144	50	77	32	191	36	530
Results above 4.0 pCi/L	64	12	22	2	37	2	139
Results below 4.0 pCi/L	69	30	45	26	130	29	329
Results incomplete	11	8	10	4	24	5	62
% of elevated levels	48%	29%	33%	7%	22%	6%	30%
Highest Reported Level	20.2	10.0	21.1	9.8	30.1	5.5	30.1
Mitigations ¹	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RRNC Starts ¹	0	0	0	0	0	18	18
Mitigation Referrals	120	10	22	0	37	0	189
MEDIA IMPRESSIONS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert	Walton/ Clarke	South-face	Totals
Radio Spots/Programs	0	0	0	178	0	0	178
Listening Audience	0	0	0	8,000	0	0	8,000
TV Spots/Programs	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Viewing Audience	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	30,000
Newspaper Articles	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Reading Audience	60,000	0	0	0	32,000	0	92,000
Newsletter Articles	3	0	0	1	0	0	4
Number Distributed	800	0	0	65	0	0	865
County Web Site Hits ³							
State Web Site Hits ²	2,046					2,517	4,563
Total Media Impressions	61,209	409	409	8,474	62,409	2,517	135,428

¹ Reported by Southface only. GA Certified Radon Professionals report Mit/RRNC annually in the July-September issue.

² Web Site Hits are shared equally by the five educators

Radon Outreach Results to Date

Total Programming & Media Impressions from the Beginning of the Radon Program—April 2003 through September 2009.

PROGRAM CONTACTS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert ¹	Walton	South-face	Other ²	Totals
Programs & Meetings	168	117	189	140	424	953	27	2,018
Participants	5,233	2,456	12,713	3,234	15,589	13,583	2,099	54,907
Materials Distributed	8,267	7,941	13,403	5,392	33,939	5,961	66	74,969
Exhibits or Events ³	86	20	62	35	92	53	31	379
Participants	32,341	1,721	41,815	10,276	96,318	9,264	2,996	194,731
Materials Distributed	33,494	3,230	25,638	6,546	16,880	1,090	1,346	88,224
Total Direct Contacts	1,736	209	135	547	1,871	7,760	52	10,037
Medical professionals	342	15	31	78	565	0	24	1,055
Home builders	197	9	11	401	232	6,895	0	7,745
Realtors	312	54	2	40	186	615	28	1,237
Consumer Contacts	885	131	91	28	888	250	0	2,273
Radon Kits Distributed	6,076	2,339	6,149	2,529	9,100	3,729	4,600	34,522
Test Results Received	1,748	544	1,796	1,207	4,102	592	849	10,838
Percent 4 pCi/L & above	21.2%	5.5%	23.4%	11.2%	23.5%	16.5%	0.0%	18.4%
Highest Reported Level	49.9	12.2	49.0	44.0	37.3	77.1	0.0	77.1
Mitigations Completed ^{5,6}	40	0	1	5	16	22	1,365	1,449
Radon Resistant Starts ^{5,6}	2	0	0	0	10	412	937	1,361
Mitigation Referrals	379	66	174	63	252	70	0	1,004
MEDIA IMPRESSIONS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert	Walton	South-face	Other	Totals
Radio Spots	42	5	8	2,376	125	1	2	2,559
Listening Audience	2,806,000	620,000	7,000	3,908,000	2,342,000	2,000	377,000	10,062,000
TV Spots	118	66	645	5	235	2	437	1,508
Viewing Audience	25,018,000	1,488,000	73,974,000	9,368	26,694,000	1,263,000	8,385,000	136,831,368
Newspaper	23	1	16	10	55	0	6	111
Circulation	795,000	98,000	1,288,317	143,000	1,807,300	0	69,500	4,201,117
Newsletter Articles	25	0	12	9	33	8	16	103
Distribution	12,700	0	12,246	4,115	1,358,420	903,048	6,054	2,296,583
Web Site Hits ⁴	21,060					32,216	0	53,276
Total Media Impressions	28,635,912	2,210,212	75,285,775	4,068,695	32,205,932	2,200,264	8,837,554	153,444,344

¹ Madison/Elbert Radon Education Program began in September of 2004.

² "Other" category includes data from radon programming by County FACS/4-H agents.

³ Data in these categories were not tracked in 2003.

⁴ Tracking of Web Site Hits started October 2006 and are shared equally by radon educators.

⁵ As of Fiscal 2008, Mitigation & RRNC data are reported quarterly by Southface only.

⁶ UGA reports on an annual basis in the final fiscal quarter, July-September, based on annual reports from NEHA/NRSB certified mitigators

Radon Extras!

Nanki Udhwani, Oconee County 1st Place Winner in the 2008-2009 Radon Poster Contest, delivers the radon message to children at Athens Montessori School (AMS).

Nanki, a former (AMS) student and currently a student at Oconee Middle School, spoke to the children about the dangers of radon and the need to test all homes. She gave the students radon rulers and note pads. Nanki presented her radon poster and recited the winning radon presentation that she gave to win First Place at 4-H County Project Achievement and at District Project Achievement.



Blast off for
January 2010
National Radon
Action Month is
right around the
corner.

Buckle your seat
belts. It's going
to be an
exciting ride!

The Georgia Radon Education Program is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in partnership with the University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences, the Environmental Division of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and Southface Energy Institute.

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