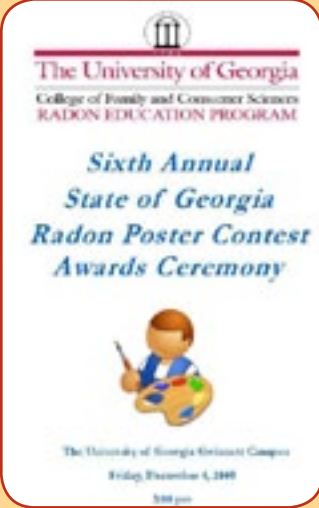




**Georgia Radon Education Program (GREP)**  
**Newsletter & Outreach Report - October - December 2009**  
 The University of Georgia (UGA) College of Family & Consumer Sciences Radon Education Program  
 Funded by the US Environmental Protection Agency Through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs  
 Partners include UGA Cooperative Extension and Southface Energy Institute.

# GREP - Winning...Changing...Improving



The 2010 Georgia Radon Contest was the largest to date with winners from eleven counties. See winning 2010 Posters and ceremony highlights on (pages 2-4)

This issue of Radon in Georgia marks the beginning of Year 7. Look for exciting changes in future issues!

Over 800 lives could be saved each year if every home in Georgia is tested for radon and fixed if high levels are found. The Georgia Radon Education Team is working to make that happen.



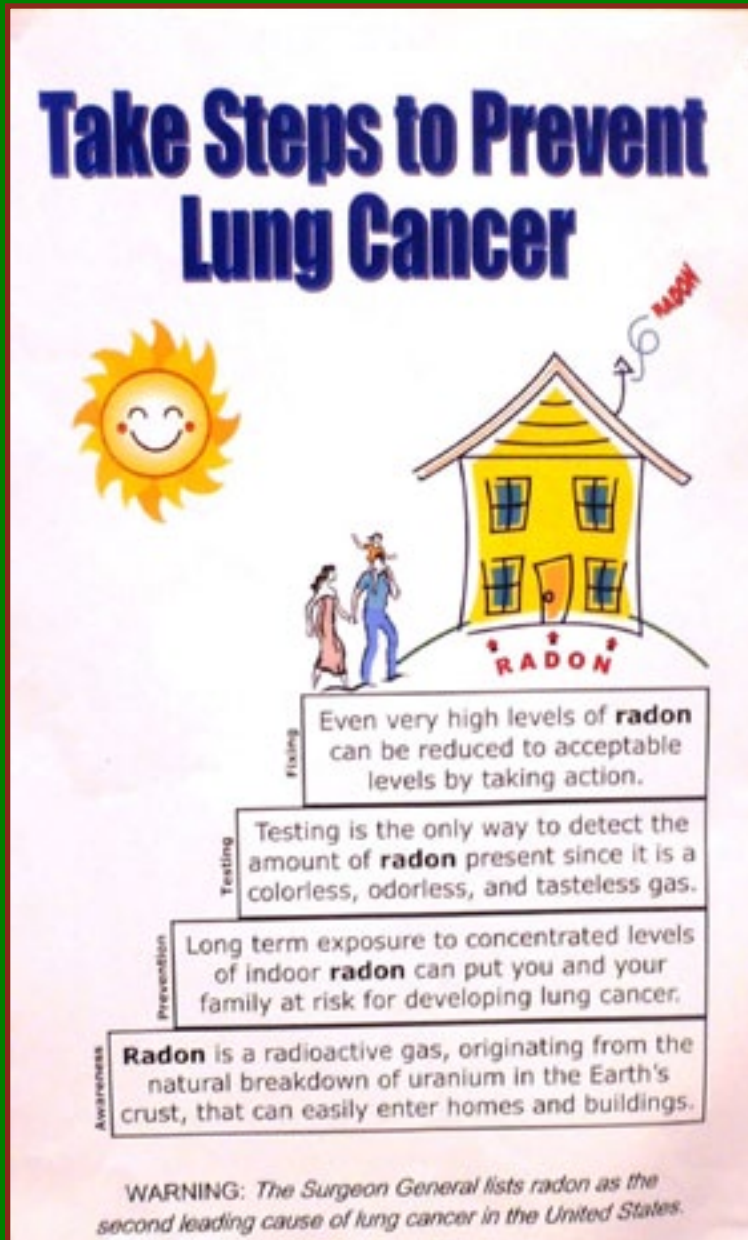
Meet Pamela R. Turner, Ph.D., new Director of the UGA Radon Education Program (page 10)

**“Fix” your radon problem and spark your neighbors’ curiosity.** (page 6)



# 1st Place Georgia Radon Poster - NRAM 2010

The 2010 Georgia Poster Contest attracted more participants than ever before from contests held in Clarke, Elbert, Gwinnett, Hall, Lowdnes, Oconee, Paulding, Putnam, Stephens, and Walton Counties. The top posters from each county were judged on the state level.



Bailey Elizabeth Guthrie, Oconee Middle School student, wowed both county and state judges, winning 1st place in Clarke County and 1st place in the 2010 Georgia Radon Poster Contest.



## Start Planning Your 2011 Poster Now!

State winners will be entered in the 2011 National Radon Poster Contest. Georgia has had three national winners since 2004! Will you be number four? Watch for contest details coming soon. Be Ready!

# 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Place Posters

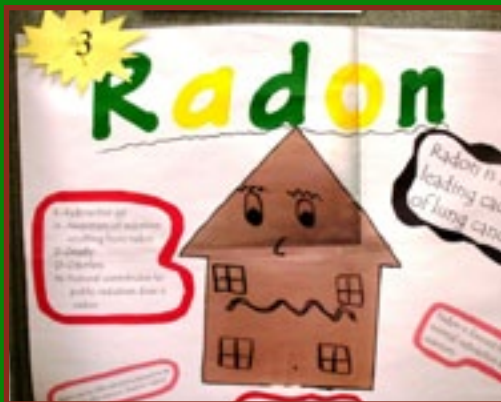
## Radon Can Cause Lung Cancer



Elaina Bailey, 5th grade 4-H'er from Stephens County, won 2nd place in the Georgia 2010 Radon Poster Contest. Joseph Krewer, Dept. of Community Affairs presented the award.



## Radon: What Is It?



Henry Slack, EPA Region IV, Atlanta, congratulates Lola Mateos, 5th grade 4-H'er from Stephens County, for capturing 3rd Place in the Georgia 2010 Radon Poster Contest.



## Where Does Radon Come From?



Outgoing UGA Radon Program Director, Dr. Jorge Atilas, presents 4th Place award in the Georgia 2010 Radon Poster Contest to Ashley Moore, Elbert County 5th grade 4-H'er.



# 2010 Poster Ceremony Photo Album



Radon poster creators, parents, sisters, brothers, teachers, principals, Cooperative Extension personnel, and many others came together December 4, 2009, to celebrate the winners of the 2010 Georgia Radon Poster Contest. Held at the UGA Gwinnett Campus in Lawrenceville, Phil Hoskins, Director of Gwinnett County Community Services, welcomed participants. Bob Smith, Georgia State Representative for District 113, Watkinsville, was the keynote speaker. Award presenters included Henry Slack, EPA Region IV; Joe Krewer, Georgia Dept. of Community Affairs; Drs. Laura Jolly, Jorge Atilas and Pamela Turner, UGA College of Family & Consumer Sciences, and the five Georgia Radon Educators.



**Allen Mitchell, Hall Co. assits  
Bob Smith**

**Bob Smith, GA State Rep.**



**Michael Koch, Mitigator**



# New Year in GREP Begins

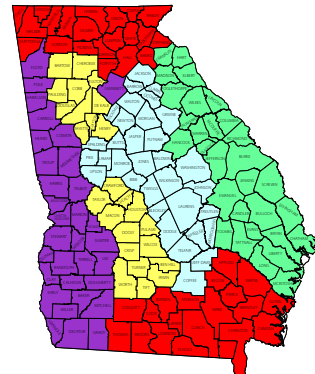
The University of Georgia Radon Education Program (GREP), funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, began in March 2003. Why? Because more than 21,000 people die each year from radon-induced lung cancer—822 of those live in Georgia. These deaths are preventable.

Radon is a colorless, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas that occurs naturally. It is produced by the decay of uranium in soil, rock and water. Radon can reach dangerous levels inside an enclosed building. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, exposure to radon gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. and the leading cause in non-smokers.

Testing is the only means of detecting radon. To encourage Georgia homeowners to test their homes for radon, UGA REP has provided 35,000 complimentary radon test kits to interested homeowners over the past six years.

Radon Educators have presented radon programs to thousands of Georgians over the past six years. Program participants include homeowners, consumers, home builders, real estate professionals, community groups, children, health care professionals and many others. Radon Educators have observed increased radon awareness and more positive attitudes towards radon over the years. More people understand the health risks of radon exposure and want to test their homes for radon.

On October 1, 2009, we began charging a nominal fee for radon test kits. A greater percentage of kit usage is expected. What does this mean for you? It means you may still get one of our high-quality AirChek radon test kits, but you will need to purchase the kit. If you attend a Radon education program, visit a radon exhibit, or go to an Educator's office, kits will be available for \$5. Current retail cost is \$14.95. You may also go online ([www.ugaradon.com](http://www.ugaradon.com)) to print out an order form. Complete the form and mail it along with a check or money order for \$6.50 to the Radon Educator for your county. To learn which Radon Educator is assigned to your county, click on the map.



The UGA Radon Education Program is lowering the risk of radon-induced lung cancer for Georgians. How? To date, 1,449 homes in Georgia have been mitigated for high radon since the program began and 1,365 new homes have been built with radon resistant features.

Take the challenge and test your home today! Look for updates in the coming months.

Becky Chenhall & Ginger Bennett, Radon Educators

# Fix Your Home - Influence Your Neighbors



Peggy Wilson moved from Florida to Lawrenceville in 1997 and like many transplants was later diagnosed with asthma. She is proactive, taking precautions at home to eliminate anything that might cause flare ups and make her life healthier and easier.

A few months ago Ms. Wilson visited the Home Expo in Gwinnett County. While there, she visited the Extension Radon Exhibit and learned about radon, the radioactive gas that is the second leading cause of lung cancer. She was afraid radon might affect her asthma condition. Ines Beltran, Gwinnett County Radon Educator, explained that there is no evidence showing radon affects an asthma condition, but plenty of evidence that it causes lung cancer.

Ms. Wilson picked up a radon test kit at the exhibit to test her home. The result from the test was 4.1 pCi/L (picoCuries per liter of air), a level higher than the EPA Action Level of 4.0 pCi/L. Ms. Beltran advised Ms. Wilson to do a second test to confirm the first high result. The second test result proved to be even higher: 5.1 pCi/L. EPA states levels of 4.0 pCi/L or above should be mitigated, and that homeowners with levels above 2 pCi/L should also consider mitigation.

Determined to take action, Ms. Wilson looked to Ms. Beltran for information about lowering the radon level in her house. Ms. Beltran explained that opening windows and sealing cracks in the foundation was not enough to bring the radon level down. She also showed Ms. Wilson pictures of a sub-slab mitigation system, explaining that it is the most effective way to lower radon levels in a home. The current list of nationally-certified radon mitigators in Georgia was also provided. Two organizations are authorized by EPA to certify radon measurement and mitigation providers: the National Environmental Health Association ([www.radongas.org](http://www.radongas.org)) and the National Radon Safety Board ([www.nrsb.org](http://www.nrsb.org)).

Armed with the list of certified radon mitigators, Ms. Wilson selected three for bids. After interviewing each mitigator and comparing written proposals and prices, she made her decision. In late September 2009, a certified mitigator installed a mitigation system in her home within a few hours.

Curious neighbors came to see what was happening. Ms. Beltran was there too and shared that this dangerous gas may also be in their homes. They decided to test their homes for radon, too.

*Ines Beltran, Radon Educator*



## Be a good neighbor!

If you have mitigated your home for radon, share your experience with your neighbors. Radon Educators provide radon programs for homeowners associations, local organizations, church groups and more. Call one today!

# Quarterly Radon Outreach

## October-December 2009

<b>PROGRAM CONTACTS</b>	<b>Hall</b>	<b>DeKalb</b>	<b>Gwinnett</b>	<b>Elbert</b>	<b>Walton</b>	<b>Southface</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Programs & Classes	17	4	1	4	10	15	51
Participants	915	70	110	37	163	525	1,820
Materials Distributed	1,025	95	0	84	210	150	1,564
Exhibits or Events	2	24	0	3	5	0	34
Participants	55	1,194	0	407	2,860	0	4,516
Materials Distributed	275	1,244	0	510	360	0	2,389
<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>498</b>
Medical Professionals	3	5	0	0	5	0	13
Home builders	3	2	0	0	15	195	215
Realtors	6	3	0	0	0	0	9
Consumer Contacts	99	30	0	17	55	60	261
Radon Kits Distributed	64	64	62	12	36	50	288
Test Results Received	28	47	35	12	84	30	236
Results above 4.0 pCi/L	11	9	12	2	26	3	63
Results below 4.0 pCi/L	13	31	22	6	52	24	148
Results incomplete	4	7	1	4	6	3	25
% of elevated levels	45.8%	22.5%	35.3%	25.0%	33.3%	11.1%	29.9%
Highest Reported Level	27.7	21.6	20.2	5.8	85.8	8.8	85.8
Mitigations <small>(reported in Sept. issue)</small>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RRNC Starts <small>(reported in Sept. issue)</small>	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Mitigation Referrals	63	0	12	2	26	0	103
<b>MEDIA IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>Hall</b>	<b>DeKalb</b>	<b>Gwinnett</b>	<b>Elbert</b>	<b>Walton</b>	<b>Southface</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Radio Spots/Programs	1	0	0	165	0	0	166
Listening Audience	6,000	0	0	8,000	0	0	14,000
TV Spots/Programs	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Viewing Audience	0	0	0	0	70,000	0	70,000
Newspaper Articles Published	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Reading Audience	0	0	0	0	11,000	0	11,000
Newsletter Articles Published	3	0	0	0	1	0	2
Number Distributed	2,750	0	0	0	1,200	0	3,950
Educator Web Articles <small>(from 10-1-2009 on)</small>	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Web articles/hits	0	0	0	0	1,200	0	1,200
State Web Site Hits <small>(split by educators)</small>	1,714					5,569	7,283
<b>TOTAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>9,093</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>8,343</b>	<b>83,743</b>	<b>5,569</b>	<b>107,434</b>

# Radon Outreach

## Program Contacts & Media Impressions through December 2009

PROGRAM CONTACTS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert	Walton	Southface	Other <sup>2</sup>	Totals
Programs & Classes	194	122	193	147	444	981	5	2,108
Participants	6,368	2,556	12,952	3,292	15,957	14,629	1,155	57,853
Materials Distributed	9,957	8,126	13,451	5,519	34,724	7,214	55	79,057
Exhibits or Events	90	50	81	39	97	58	31	446
Participants	33,311	3,095	46,815	11,761	99,478	9,972	2,996	207,428
Materials Distributed	34,039	5,024	32,138	7,056	17,590	1,090	1,346	98,283
<b>Total Direct Contacts</b>	<b>2,295</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>2,221</b>	<b>8,396</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14,169</b>
Medical professionals	351	22	31	78	574	0	0	1,080
Home builders	214	10	12	401	286	7,291	0	8,214
Realtors	333	61	4	40	188	715	28	1,369
Consumer Contacts	1,397	186	276	56	1,173	390	0	3,478
Radon Kits Distributed	6,439	2,519	6,415	2,582	9,318	4,504	4,220	35,997
Test Results Received	1,907	660	1,925	1,232	4,236	800	712	11,472
Results 4 pCi/L & above	24.6%	16.5%	19.8%	11.2%	20.0%	26.1%	15.9%	18.8%
Highest Reported Level	49.9	21.6	49.0	44.0	85.8	77.1	0.0	85.8
Mitigations <sup>3</sup>	40	0	1	5	16	22	1,365	1,449
RRNC Starts <sup>3</sup>	2	0	0	0	10	416	937	1,365
Mitigation Referrals	558	76	202	65	300	259	0	1,460
MEDIA IMPRESSIONS	Hall	DeKalb	Gwinnett	Elbert	Walton	Southface	Other <sup>2</sup>	Totals
Radio Spots	43	7	8	2,704	127	1	0	2,892
Listening Audience	2,812,000	1,820,000	7,000	3,924,000	2,420,000	2,000	0	11,362,000
TV Spots	118	66	645	5	238	2	435	1,511
Viewing Audience	25,018,000	1,488,000	73,974,000	9,368	26,794,000	1,263,000	7,685,000	136,931,368
Newspaper Articles	22	1	16	10	58	0	3	113
Circulation	795,000	98,000	1,288,317	143,000	1,878,300	0	39,000	4,272,117
Newsletter Articles	36	1	12	10	35	8	2	118
Distribution	18,800	99	12,246	4,615	1,360,820	903,048	4,000	2,305,682
Web Articles	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hits	0	0	0	0	1,200	0	0	1,200
State Web Site Hits <sup>4</sup>	20,728					42,075	0	62,803
<b>TOTAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>28,647,946</b>	<b>3,410,245</b>	<b>75,285,709</b>	<b>4,085,129</b>	<b>32,458,466</b>	<b>2,210,123</b>	<b>7,728,000</b>	<b>254,935,170</b>

<sup>1</sup> Sumpter County Radon Education program was terminated in September 2004; output included in Totals. <sup>2</sup> Other includes radon education/results reported by other FACS/4-H Agents. <sup>3</sup> Reported quarterly by Southface only. Certified GA mitigators report their mitigations & RRNCs annually in the J-A quarter in the "other" column. <sup>4</sup> UGA Radon Program web hits are shared equally among the 5 radon educators.

# GA Radon Educators in Action

## Elbert County Fall Festival

The Fall Festival is hosted each year by the Elbert County Chamber of Commerce. On November 7, 2009, the Elbert County Extension staff displayed exhibits at the Festival. Exhibits provided information to area residents about radon, holiday food safety, 4-H, and agriculture. An estimated 3,000 people attended this year's festival.

*Christa Campbell, Radon Educator*



## Hall County Area Outreach

Ginger Bennett, Radon Educator in the Hall County area, shared radon risk information with varied audiences during October - December 2009.



Top Left: ***E. Hall Middle School Health Fair*** - October  
Bottom Left: ***Clermont Lions Club*** - November  
Right: ***Hall County Radon Poster Contest Awards*** presented at Gainesville First Baptist Church's After School Program - December

## Welcome! New UGA Radon Program Director!

October 1, 2009, begins a new chapter for the UGA Radon Education Program. It is a pleasure to welcome Pamela R. Turner Ph.D. as the new Director of the UGA Radon Education Program. Dr. Turner has been with the University of Georgia since 2005 and is Assistant Professor and Housing Extension Specialist. She develops training tools and resources for Family and Consumer Sciences County Extension Agents to use for programs in counties across Georgia.



Dr. Turner brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Radon Program. She has authored numerous publications on indoor air quality and housing and has served as Principal Investigator for numerous housing grants. Dr. Turner works with the National Center for Healthy Homes to provide

the “Essentials for Healthy Homes Practitioners” certification course and Lead Safe Work Practices trainings.

Dr. Turner is currently developing an interactive website to promote green programming activities and resources. The website will include the radon theme “Living Green from the Ground Up” and encourage testing for radon.

Dr. Turner is excited about this new opportunity. As she provides leadership to the five Radon Educators, Dr. Turner hopes to improve the lives of Georgia homeowners, as well as incorporate Radon into UGA’s housing programs.

Dr. Turner is originally from Montana and earned her Ph.D. from the University of Maryland. Welcome Aboard, Dr. Pamela Turner!

Becky Chenhall & Ginger Bennett, Radon Educators

## Got Radon? You May Be Developing Lung Cancer!

- Radon, the 2nd leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking, is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers.
- Radon is a natural decay product of uranium found in most soil and rock. You can’t see, smell or taste radon gas. It is a silent killer because it causes no immediate symptoms.
- Radon kills more than 800 Georgians each year.
- High levels have been found in 34 percent of Northeast Georgia homes tested through the GREP.
- The only way to protect your family is to test your home and fix the problem.
- Get a do-it-yourself radon test kit at reduced cost. Contact your designated Radon Educator (click map on page 5) or download a mail-order form at [www.UGAradon.com](http://www.UGAradon.com).

# Radon in the News

Volume 5, Issue 4  
Fall 2009

## 'News You Can Use' From the Extension Office


UGA Cooperative Extension in Hall County

### County Commissioners Learn Radon Risks

At their July 20 work session, Hall County Commissioners learned of the danger of breathing radioactive radon gas. An estimated 822 Georgians die each year from radon-related lung cancer.

Area Radon Educator Ginger Bennett presented a short overview of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Radon Education Program (UGAREP), including compelling data on radon tests conducted in the county.

Commissioners Bobby Banks, Ashley Bell, Steve Gailey, Chairman Tom Oliver, and Billy Powell heard a presentation on the dangers of radon, a radioactive gas found in nearly all soils. Each Commissioner also received a test kit to ensure their homes are not at risk.



**all County Cooperative Extension provides information and assistance in the areas of:**  
Agriculture and the Environment  
4-H and Youth Development  
Family & Consumer Sciences  
Radon Education



What shade of green are you? Find out by clicking on the UGAGreenWay banner. Then click on the link to take the quiz. This new UGA College of Family & Consumer Sciences / Cooperative Extension web site shows how to live green.

barrowcountynews.com

NEWS DINING GUIDE ASK THE EXPERT COMMUNITY CLASSIFIED / LEGAL

## Georgia is #1 in radon-induced lung cancer

### RELATED CONTENT

#### New 'action level' for radon

The World Health Organization announced that they have established a new limit for indoor radon gas levels. The previously accepted "action level" was 4.0. The new maximum radon level is 2.7. Based on this new threshold, millions of U.S. homes will require repairs to reduce the levels of the gas. Each year, approximately 20,000 Americans die from exposure to radon (more than any other in-home risk including fires, carbon monoxide, falls, drowning, poisonings, handguns, etc.) This new plan of action by the World Health Organization will save thousands of lives each year in the U.S. and potentially millions of lives worldwide.

typically moves up through the ground to the air above and into the home through cracks and other holes in the foundation. The home traps radon inside, where it can build up.

Much of the radon in north Georgia comes from the decay of uranium found in granite rock. Areas with granite tend to have a higher potential for elevated radon. Any home, old or new, can have a radon problem and should be tested. Testing is the only way to know the radon level in the home. One out of every 15 homes in the U.S. is expected to have elevated radon.

EPA's action level is 4.0 pCi/L or above. 4.0 or above is considered high. EPA recommends that any home with a test result of 4.0 or above be fixed. (However, EPA says to consider fixing your home if the radon level is between 2.0 and 4.0) The World Health Organization is recommending that homeowners take action to remediate the radon level in their home if it exceeds 2.7 pCi/L.

The national indoor average is 1.3 pCi/L and the average outdoor level is 0.4 pCi/L. Even outdoors, radon is not zero because it is naturally occurring.

Bottom Line: the lower the radon level, the better. If you have high radon, it can be reduced. Homes with high radon can be fixed. Contact a certified Georgia Radon Mitigator.

You may order a radon test kit by mail using the online form found at the University of Georgia Radon Education Program website. [www.fcs.uga.edu/radon](http://www.fcs.uga.edu/radon)

For additional information, contact your local UGA County Extension Office or call Radon Educator, Becky Chenhall (770) 267-1324.

**By Becky Chenhall**  
Columnist  
POSTED Oct. 26, 2009 10:36 a.m.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. Radon is the first leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. More than 21,000 people die each year from radon-induced lung cancer — 822 in Georgia. In fact, Georgia is the number one state in the Southeast for radon-induced lung cancer.

Radon is a radioactive gas that occurs naturally. Radon is invisible and tasteless which makes it easy to ignore. Radon comes from the decay of uranium in soil, rock and water and gets into the air we breathe. It

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

### UGA Radon Program Team

**Ginger Bennett, Editor**

770/535-8290  
bennettg@uga.edu

**Ines Beltran**

678/377-4010  
inesb@uga.edu

**Christa Campbell**

706/283-2037  
christaa@uga.edu

**Becky Chenhall**

770/267-1324  
chenhall@uga.edu

**Edda Cotto-Rivera**

404/298-4072  
ecrivera@uga.edu

**Dr. Pamela R. Turner, Director**

706/542-9a65  
prtturner@uga.edu

**UGA Cooperative Extension offers its educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action organization.**