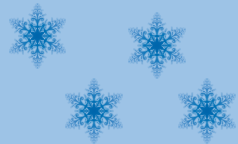


January 2020

Naugatuck Valley Health District

PROUDLY SERVING: ANSONIA, BEACON FALLS, DERBY, NAUGATUCK,
SEYMOUR AND SHELTON



Newsletter

SPOTLIGHT

- * Radon (1)
- * FREE EVENT (1)
- * Loneliness Epidemic (2)
- * Buff Smoothie (2)
- * Winter Preparedness (3)
- * Shoveling Tips (3)
- * Preparedness Graphic (3)



Contact Us At
NVHD

98 Bank Street
Seymour, CT 06483
Phone: (203) 881-3255
www.nvhd.org
Are you following us on
SOCIAL MEDIA?
@naugvalleyHD
#naugvalleyHD



January Is National RADON Awareness Month!

What is Radon?

Radon is a naturally occurring colorless, odorless and tasteless gas. Radon is formed from the natural breakdown, or radioactive decay, of uranium. It is usually found in igneous rock and soil but can also enter ground water and well water.

Exposure

The primary routes of potential human exposure to radon are inhalation and ingestion. The action level for radon is 4pCi/L. It is important to note that the action level is not a safe level, as there are no "safe" levels of radon gas. At the 4 pCi/L action guideline level, radon carries about 1,000 times the risk of death as any other Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) carcinogen.

Health Impact

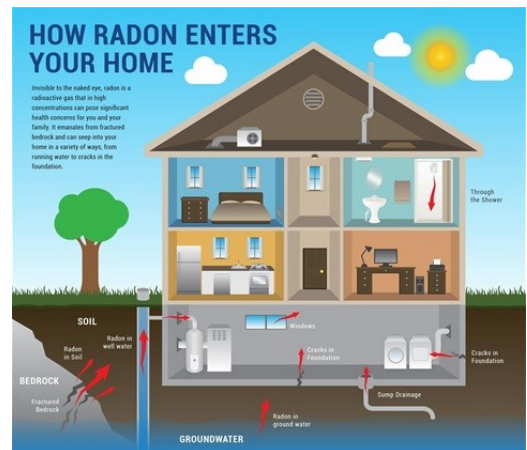
Radon is a national environmental health problem. There are no immediate symptoms that will alert you to the presence of radon. However, years of exposure can lead to severe health consequences. The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. The EPA and Surgeon General's Office have estimated that 20,000 lung cancer deaths caused each year by radon. Smokers with high radon levels in their homes are at even higher risk for developing lung cancer.

Test Your Home

Testing is the only way to know your home's radon levels. The best time to test your home is during the winter when your windows and doors are kept shut and A/C systems are not running. Tests should be conducted in the lowest living level of the house.

Free Test Kits Available!

***While supplies last**, residents in the towns of Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Naugatuck, Seymour, and Shelton can pick up a **FREE** radon test kit at the health department located at **98 Bank Street in Seymour** starting **January 21st, 2020** between the hours of 9-11 AM and 1-3 PM. Supplies are limited, so please call Jamie at (203) 881-3255 X 108 to make sure test kits are still available before you head to the health department. *Source: www.epa.gov*



NVHD to host FREE Radon Learning Session

WHEN: January 22nd, 2020 from 12-1 PM

WHERE: Kellogg Center, 500 Hawthorne Ave, Derby, CT

Register: Space is limited!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Radon2020>

**Light snacks will be provided, participants are encouraged to bring their own lunch.*



Loneliness Is the Quiet Health Epidemic Impacting Your Heart, Brain, and Longevity...

Source: <https://www.prevention.com/health/mental-health/a29873388/loneliness-epidemic/>

According to a literature review, **lacking a social connection is considered more dangerous than smoking 15 cigarettes a day and deadlier than obesity.** Thus it makes sense how feeling alone can translate into physical ailments. Humans are social creatures, which doesn't mean we simply enjoy being social; it means we *need* to be. It's how we survive—together, in groups, finding strength in numbers even if, unlike our ancestors, we wouldn't literally starve to death if we didn't have a go-to crew.

Being socially isolated, by contrast, hurts emotionally and psychologically, and its stresses take a physical toll. Persistent loneliness (lasting longer than two weeks) is linked to high blood pressure, depression, heart disease, and stroke among other conditions, including Alzheimer's disease. This appears to be due to increased inflammation; in excess, inflammation is associated with chronic disease.

"We need to take our social relationships as seriously as we take our diet, exercise, nutrition, and everything else that we know impacts our health," she says.

If loneliness is a disease, it's one that's reached pandemic proportions. A growing number of Americans now live by themselves, which is one reason we're experiencing greater loneliness than ever before. Another factor is the lightning-fast evolution of technology. "We have had more change in the last 24 years than we did in the previous 2,500," says Dilip Jeste, M.D., director of UC-San Diego's Department of Healthy Aging. "Social changes have been dramatic, and loneliness is definitely a part of that." This is related to—but by no means all about—social media.

The prescription is not so clear for those of us who are long out of school. Holt-Lunstad is calling for large-scale campaigns like those that created awareness of the dangers of smoking, obesity, and drug use. Others are trying to discover medicinal fixes. But for now, the best thing we can do for ourselves, for our health, is to nurture our friendships. It just might save our lives.

6 Ways to Feel Less Lonely, and More Connected

Look up old friends. They probably want to catch up too.

Talk to strangers. Even 30 seconds of friendly conversation with a store clerk or cabdriver has a positive impact on mood.

Practice gratitude. Focus on things in your life that make you feel fortunate: your pets, perhaps, or a nice place to live...even a sunny day.

Exercise and get enough sleep. Both contribute to mood regulation and overall health.

Take a class. Sign up for something you've never tried, like dance, art, or meditation. Active learning exercises your brain, and you may make some new friends.

Volunteer. It's hard to feel sorry for yourself when you're helping improve the lives of others. Data shows that volunteering gives people purpose, which raises their self-esteem, in turn making them less lonely.

The BUFF Smoothie— Courtesy of Good Eats

2 Servings

Ingredients:

- 4 ounces plain, unsweetened almond milk
- 4 ounces pomegranate juice
- 4 ounces frozen banana
- 4 ounces frozen strawberries
- 4 ounces frozen blueberries
- 4 ounces frozen peaches



Combine all ingredients in the carafe of a blender. Blend on medium for 1 minute. Serve Immediately Source: www.foodnetwork.com

Flu Clinic:

Flu shots are given at NVHD on Tuesdays by appointment, 203-881-3255, ask for Kristin.

Insurance accepted:

Aetna, Cigna,
Anthem,
Connecticare,
Medicare Part B

Immunization Clinic:

Vaccines for adults and children every Tuesday 2:00-3:30 pm by appointment, 203-881-3255, ask for Kristin.

Lead Program for Children:

Children up to age 6 are screened for lead by their doctor. Education, case management, physician referral, environmental investigations are provided for children with high lead levels. Call Jamie for more information, 203-881-3255.



Winter Preparedness



A winter storm can range from freezing rain and ice, to moderate snowfall over a few hours, to a blizzard that lasts for several days. Many winter storms are accompanied by dangerously low temperatures.

Winter storms can cause power outages that last for days. They can make roads and walkways dangerous or impassable and close or limit critical community services such as public transportation, child care, health programs and schools. Injuries and deaths may occur from exposure, dangerous road conditions, and carbon monoxide poisoning and other conditions.

Make a Plan

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency. Visit www.ready.gov/make-a-plan to create yours today!

Safety Tips

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, or any partially enclosed area.
- Have a working carbon monoxide detector. Carbon monoxide-related deaths are highest during colder months.
- Shut off water valves.
- Sign up for **CodeRED** for town alerts by visiting your town's municipal website.

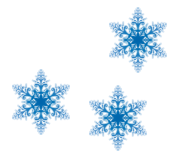
Make a Kit

Make an emergency kit for at least 3 days of self-sufficiency for each person and your pets. Store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as a plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- **Water— 1 gallon per person per day**
- **Non-perishable food & can opener**
- **Pet food and medication**
- **Battery-powered or hand crank radio**
- **Flashlight**
- **Batteries**
- **First Aid Kit and 7-day supply of medications**
- **Copy of important documents/medical info.**
- **Extra clothes, blankets**

For more recommended items, visit www.ready.gov/build-a-kit. Keep an extra kit specifically created for your car. Learn more at www.ready.gov/car.



Shoveling Tips

Don't suffer a preventable snow shoveling injury! Use these tips to stay safe this winter.

1. Dress warm and wear lots of layers that can be taken off easily.
2. Stretch before hand to loosen up your muscles and prevent an injury.
3. Remember to stay hydrated and have a bottle of water near by.
4. Put down salt and sand before the snow hits to prevent slips.
5. Lift the snow with your legs, NOT your back.
6. Always try to push the snow, rather than lift it up.



Now/Prepare for a Winter Storm

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

You may not be at home when the storm starts, so it is important to have basic supplies of food and water as well as a way to stay warm without power in several locations such as your workplace, vehicle, and/or school. You can build your supplies over time by adding a few items each week or month. Gather, in advance, the necessary supplies and items you will need to stay safe after the winter storm passes. For a complete list of emergency supplies, visit www.ready.gov/kit. Check these supplies off of your Winter Storm Preparedness Checklist once you add them to your emergency kit, which appears at the end of this document.



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Make sure you have everything you will need to get in touch with your family either through cellular phones or email.

MEDICAL NEEDS

Be equipped to tend to any current or unexpected medical conditions your family members may have. Ask your doctor about storing prescription medication such as at least a three-days' supply of heart and blood pressure medication, insulin for diabetics, and other prescription drugs such as inhalers for those with asthma. Include battery backup power for power-dependent mobility devices, oxygen, and other assistive technology needs.

CRITICAL DOCUMENTS

Place any important documents in a sealed, waterproof container to keep them dry and easily accessible.

TOOLS AND SAFETY ITEMS

Small items like matches, flashlights, a multi-tool, pocket knife, and a whistle (to signal for help) can make a huge difference for your family while weathering a storm.

FOOD/SUPPLIES

Have at least a three-days' supply of non-perishable food and water for your family. Remember to store anything specific to your family's needs.

WARM CLOTHING & BLANKETS

Warm clothes and blankets can help prevent hypothermia. Do not forget warm, waterproof, and protective footwear as well as gloves.

Ask yourself, "What would I need for myself and my family if a winter storm struck?" and "What would I or my family require if we did not have access to a grocery store or pharmacy for at least three days?" Add any of these specific items to your Winter Storm Preparedness Checklist.