

RADON

WHEREAS, Radon is a naturally-occurring, colorless, radioactive gas formed by radioactive decay of radioactive elements, such as uranium found in soils and rocks all across the U.S., which can move through the soil into the air and ground water^{1, 2}; and

WHEREAS, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that radon causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year; the U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and that breathing it over prolonged periods can present a significant health risk to families; and, having a 4pCi/L level is equal to smoking 8 cigarettes per day or having 200 chest x-rays per year in its effects upon the lungs^{3, 4, 5}; and

WHEREAS, The EPA has conducted a National School Radon Survey and the results show widespread radon contamination in schools with estimates that 19.3% of U.S. schools, nearly one in five, have at least one frequently occupied ground contact room with radon levels above 4 pCi/L, the level at which EPA and the Center for Disease Control recommends mitigation^{6, 7}; and,

WHEREAS, Surveys conducted by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality/Division of Radiation Control indicate that 30% of the homes tested in Utah are at concentrations above 4 pCi/L⁸; and

WHEREAS, The EPA recommends that all schools test and periodically re-test for radon and mitigate areas with elevated concentrations⁹; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Utah PTA work to inform parents about the concerns of radon exposure and make them aware of low cost test kits available for their homes; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA, along with its constituent bodies, encourage all Utah school districts to have all school buildings periodically tested for radon, especially areas that are frequently occupied and have a floor or a wall touching the ground or above an enclosed crawl space; and be it further

Resolved, That Utah PTA, along with its constituent bodies, encourage all Utah school districts to work to correct all areas where radon levels are above 4 pCi/L and install radon prevention features during construction of new buildings or renovation of existing buildings.

(Updates and replaces HEA 1998-2 Radon)

¹"What is radon?" American Cancer Society. www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/othercarcinogens/pollution/radon. 31 Mar. 2013. Web. 5 Nov. 13.

²"Radon Fact Sheet." Air Check, Inc. Radon.com. www.radon.com/radon_facts.html (2009); Web. 5 Nov. 2013.

³"Health Risks: Exposure to Radon causes Lung Cancer in Non-Smokers and Smokers Alike." United States Environmental Protection Agency. www.epa.gov/radon/healthrisks.html. 19 Mar. 2013. Web. 5 Nov. 2013.

⁴"Surgeon General Releases National Health Advisory on Radon." U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. www.surgeongeneral.org/news/2005/01/sg01132005.html. 13 Jan 2005. Web. 5 Nov. 2013.

⁵"Radon Levels Explained. "Indoor Air Health Advisor. <http://www.indoor-air-health-advisor.com/radon-levels.html>. Web. 5 Nov. 2013

⁶"The Radon Problem in Schools". Radon Measurement in Schools. United States Environmental Protection Agency. (July 1993). http://www.epa.gov/radon/pdfs/radon_measurement_in_schools.pdf. Web. 11 Jan. 2014.

⁷"Radiation and Your Health." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/brochure/profile_radon.htm. (January 2013). Web. 11 Jan. 2014.

⁸"Radon Program: Frequently Asked Questions." Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Radiation Control. <http://www.radon.utah.gov/radonfaqs.htm>. 28 Oct. 2013. Web. 5 Nov. 2013.

⁹"Managing Radon in Schools." United States Environmental Protection Agency. http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/pdfs/kit/managing_radon.pdf. (June 2010). Web. 11 Jan. 2014.