

Radon poses little threat, testing available

Katie Peterson | Staff Writer

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says exposure to radon is the No. 2 leading cause of lung cancer — No. 1 for non-smokers — but the reality is the likelihood of long enough exposure to develop the cancer is minimal.

The EPA estimates that a person must have a lifetime (75 years consecutively) of exposure to four picocuries or higher per liter of air to be at risk for the cancer.

The risk changes de-

pending on whether a person smokes or has smoked.

According to a radon risk fact sheet provided by the Army Public Health Center, non-smokers have a seven in 1,000 risk of developing lung cancer. People who smoke have a 62 in 1,000 risk of developing lung cancer. People who no longer smoke but have a history of smoking, fall within that spectrum.

The key thing to do if radon is suspected in the home is schedule a work order through Fort Leavenworth Frontier Heritage Communities. For more

information about radon and the testing and mitigation process on post, visit

<https://www.fleavenworthlamp.com/featured/2019/09/26/experts-discuss-radon-threat-mitigation-in-homes/>.

Mitigation systems will be installed if two tests confirm a reading of four picocuries or higher. Currently, there is a six-month waiting list for mitigation systems to be installed, but according to the APHC, Fort Leavenworth is within the appropriate timeline. For homes with levels of zero to four picocuries,

no action is required. For homes with levels of more

than four picocuries but less than eight picocuries, mitigation within five years is recommended. For homes with levels of more than eight picocuries but less than 20 picocuries, mitigation within four years is recommended. For homes with levels of more than 20 picocuries but less than 200 picocuries, mitigation within six months is recommended. For homes with more than 200 picocuries, mitigation within one month or the relocation of the occupant is rec-

ommended.

FLFHC has records of radon tests for many homes on post. There is no record of any home ever testing higher than 17 picocuries per liter.

FLFHC currently follows government guidelines for radon testing and mitigation installation. All guidelines for testing and mitigation given by the EPA and the APHC are recommendations, not requirements, according to Joe Gandara, Michaels Military Housing community director. Additionally, the Department of Defense

guidelines refer to office spaces and government buildings, not private residences.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/radon/sosradon.org.

For more information on the mitigation installation process, e-mail Gandara at igandara@tmo.com or Rick Field, Housing Oversight Office housing division chief, at richard.lfield.civ@mail.mil. To put in a work order for a radon test, call the FLFHC Maintenance Office at (913) 651-3838.