

In This Issue:

Rock Solid

No Mickey Mouse Conference

Wild (West) Conference

A Sure Bet In Vegas

Stop And Smell The Radon

A Little Bit Country

Dave's Corner

Rock Solid

In Greek mythology there was a King of Corinth named Sisyphus. He was condemned in Hades to roll a huge stone uphill and the stone always rolled back down. Peter Hendrick, Executive Director of the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists(AARST), is a modern day Sisyphus. Instead of a stone he's dealing with the government and while not condemned in Hades he's trying to pull the radon industry together.

Mr. Hendrick is trying to get the government to enforce its own laws regarding radon. The Indoor Radon Abatement Act was passed by Congress in 1988. The EPA established a guideline of 4 picocuries per liter of indoor air as an acceptable limit. The EPA spent considerable time and effort refining its estimates of risks from radon exposure in homes.

These estimates have withstood many tests and are considered to be fairly accurate. They relied heavily on the National Academy of Science's reports on the Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation (BEIR) which in turn used two different models for estimating these risks. In the EPA's 1992 "A Citizen's Guide to Radon" estimates were that one life was being saved for every 2,900 mitigations completed nationwide.

According to Peter Hendrick, however, "the current remediation rate is completely inadequate to address the current level of radiation risk and exposure and still keep up with new home construction." More houses with elevated radon are being built each year than the number of mitigations being done. He estimates that "At this rate, within twelve years...38 million Americans will be exposed to unacceptable doses of radiation." He also estimates that within twelve years, "over a quarter of a million people will die from radon induced lung cancer."

And then there's Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This Federal agency, tasked with making sure that dwellings are free from environmental hazards, has decided to pretty much ignore the radon issue. HUD won't require radon testing because it maintains, incorrectly, that the EPA doesn't really have a radon standard. Therefore, since there is no standard than there is no proof that radon is really a health risk.

HUD's lack of concern is particularly appalling because its jurisdiction includes government regulated mortgages (VA, FHA, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). The purpose of these mortgages is to ensure that a greater percentage of the population can afford to

Radon in indoor air is estimated to cause between 15,000 and 22,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the United States"

Environmental Protection Agency

REWARD

Reward offered for your email address. We are updating our database... provide us your email address and we'll send you a free gift.

Email us at:

fanmail@radonaway.com

RadonAway has all Fantech radon fans available at very competitive pricing



buy a home. Under HUD's regulation (24 CFR 50), homes under its purview must have "an environmental risk review prior to the sales transaction."

Radon Today urges its readers to get involved. If you're not already a member of AARST this would be an excellent time to join. Let's help Mr. Hendrick push this stone to the top. For more information please feel free to contact Peter Hendrick at (603) 756-9259 or e-mail him at director@aarst.org. If you would like a full copy of his opinions regarding the government's failure on the radon issue you can go to AARST's web site at www.aarst.org. You may also get a membership application to join AARST by calling a RadonAway customer service representative at 1-800-767-3703.

No Mickey Mouse Conference

Once again the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) did a superb job of blending education and fun at the annual Inspection World Conference and Exhibition. And once again it was a family friendly event.

This year it ran from January 15th to the 18th and was held at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida. On Thursday there was a reception to welcome exhibitors to the event. ASHI boasts having "the largest exhibition in the inspection profession". This year there were over sixty exhibitors and the range was amazing...everything from pest control to insurance for liability coverage.

The special events started the first day with an option to take the "Disney by Design" tour which provided a chance to see how some of the theme parks' illusions were created. The following day there was a lunch for spouses followed by a boat tour. Saturday was the President's Gala called "Coast - to - Coast Party." This was held at the Disney-MGM Studios and included an orchestra and certain attractions that had been reserved solely for the ASHI group.

On the educational front, ASHI concentrated on four areas: The Business Track, Candidate Track, Advanced Technical Track and the Commercial & Special Track. Kudos to all those involved who made this show such a success.

Wild (West) Conference

A big round of applause goes to the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists, in conjunction with The Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, for an International Radon Symposium that was really well done.

The event was held in Reno, Nevada on October 27th to the 30th.

The theme was "Radon Professionals... Saving Lives." The speakers and presenters were top-notch and a wide range of topics were covered.

Dr. Tom Hei from Columbia University presented his findings on "New Evidence for Bystander Effect"; Dr. Willard E. Hobbs, lecturer at UC Santa Barbara, presented "Reducing the Electrical Cost of Radon Mitigation" and also "Effect of Activity Patterns on Radon Exposure." On an international note, Dr. Vladimir Nickolaevich Sevostyanov presented "Results of Radon Survey on Some Industrial Sites and Dwellings in Kazakhstan" and Dr. Mahmoud Khaled Ahamad Kullab, an assistant professor at Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan presented "Assessment of Radon-222 Concentration inside Dwellings and in Soil in Jordan."

On the lighter side, there was dinner and entertainment in Virginia City at the Delta Saloon and Café. Virginia City was once a thriving town in the gold rush days and it has been carefully preserved.

Exhibitors did a great job displaying all the latest in radon technology.

Overall a job well done.



A Sure Bet In Vegas

Attention Home Inspectors: Inspection Training Associates (ITA) is having its Inspection Expo 2003 on October 6th through the 8th at the Tropicana Resort in Las Vegas, NV.

This is an opportunity to get continuing education credits as well as a chance to network and see firsthand the latest technology.

For more information, or to register, call 1-800-323-9235.

Stop And Smell The Radon

Congratulations to the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST) on the birth of its new non-profit subcommittee called the American Radon Policy Coalition (ARPC). In a letter to radon industry members, Dallas L. Jones of Radalink, Inc., the AARST – ARPC Committee Chairman, explained its reason for being.

ARPC's "sole mission is to enforce, strengthen and shape public policy for the prevention of lung cancer caused by needless indoor radon exposure." The goal is to unite radon professionals and others to encourage the enforcement of policies which already exist and to remind those in government that radon does cause lung cancer.

Dallas Jones listed a number of amendments, regulations, policies and acts which are on the books but are being ignored. There is the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (24CFR50.3(I)1) which advises the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that it must make sure that all property in its programs "be free of hazardous materials, contamination, toxic chemicals and gasses, and radioactive substances...". The Stewart B. McKinney Amendments require HUD to "develop and implement a policy to protect residents of HUD assisted housing from the dangers of indoor radon exposure."

There is also the 1988 Indoor Radon Abatement Act which states: "The Secretary [of HUD] shall utilize any guideline, information, or standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency for testing residential and non-residential radon, identifying elevated radon levels, identifying when remedial actions should be taken."

There are several other regulations being ignored. You get the idea. So the issue for the radon industry became how to get radon professionals to speak with one strong voice and what other voices could be added. One excellent source is the American Lung Association. In a show of support of ARPC's goals, it sent a letter to HUD, "expressing their concerns and requesting a meeting with HUD officials on behalf of the ARPC."

ARPC is also reaching out to cancer doctors and hospice workers. Dallas Jones mentions one doctor in particular, Lane Price, an oncologist in Decatur, Alabama. Apparently Dr. Price attended a community meeting on new building codes and is credited with standing up and saying, "Today I signed four death certificates for lung cancer victims. Two of them never smoked a cigarette.

Now when are we going to do something about this." As a result the code now contains Radon Resistant New Construction Requirements. Dallas Jones reports that Dr. Price has been invited to the October 2003 International Radon Symposium in Nashville as the keynote speaker.

The ARPC is also seeking the support of the American Association of Hospice Nurses since they are on the front lines of the lung cancer war. And the ARPC would also like to humanize the cancer issue "by having the doctors disseminate radon information that directs patients to contact AARST..." with the idea that maybe they'll share their stories with the media.

A way to support the ARPC is to become a sponsor. According to Dallas Jones, "Each sponsor will receive display advertising commensurate with your 'Sponsorship Level' in the Radon Advocacy Journal to be published at the annual International Radon Symposium and receive a (sic) acknowledgement on the ARPC website (www.radonnews.org) also according to your level." Radalink, by the way, has already pledged \$5,000 which makes them the first Platinum Sponsor. Other sponsors include: Spruce Environmental, \$5,000; FanTech and Radon Control, Inc., \$2,500 each and FemtoTech, \$500.



A Little Bit Country

Hey y'all, the 2003 International Radon Symposium will be held on October 5th through the 8th at the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

This event is sponsored by The American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST) in cooperation with The Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD). Hard to believe but this is the 13th national meeting.

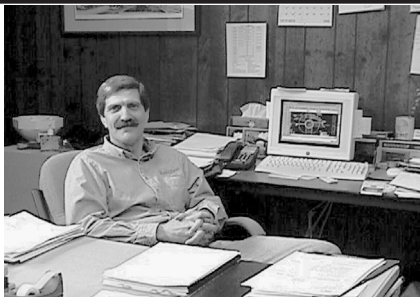
The deadline for abstracts is May 1st and if you need additional information you may get in touch with Rick Walmer, this year's conference chair. He can be reached by calling (717) 274-9511, or e-mail him at rwalmer@keyradon.com or write him at AARST Secretary c/o QBSI, 929 Mt. Zion Road, Lebanon, PA 17046.



187 Neck Road
P.O. Box 8244
Ward Hill, MA 01835

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ATKINSON, NH
PERMIT NO. 12

Address Service Requested



Dave's Corner

Mitigation System Winter Freeze-ups

This winter has been colder than normal in many parts of the country with extended periods when the temperatures stayed below freezing. As a result, many mitigators received phone calls from homeowners about problems with their mitigation systems. The symptoms are generally that the fan continues to run normally but the u-tube manometer gauge reads zero or the u-tube reading has dropped below its normal reading. The problem is caused by ice that has formed in the pipe, usually at the top. The ice is caused by condensation that forms inside the pipe from the air being drawn through the cold pipe.

Correcting the problem could entail disassembling the pipe to clear the ice. You could also possibly do nothing if the weather is expected to moderate. The warmth from the sun and the fan motor will eventually clear the ice.

How do you prevent the problem? It is a very tall order indeed and is not too easily accomplished. The problem occurs on systems with long lengths of pipe exposed to the cold temperatures so you can minimize the exterior pipe on a system. An interior pipe system will not freeze except perhaps in extreme climates. Using 4-inch pipe instead of 3-inch pipe will help minimize the possibility of the pipe freezing completely closed and using Schedule 40 pipe can also help by providing additional insulation from the cold. Insulating the exposed pipe will also help. You should also avoid the use of vent caps in cold climates, as the cap grates can easily freeze solid. Some mitigators will use black ABS pipe to absorb the solar energy or even add heat tape to the pipe.

I welcome any input from readers on other strategies to deal with the icing problem.

e-mail us at:



fanmail@radonaway.com