



RISK MANAGEMENT
SAFETY AND
LOSS CONTROL

Risky Business

SAFETY AND LOSS CONTROL NEWS — JANUARY 2022

VOL 7, NO 1

**THIS
MONTH'S
SAFETY
EMPHASIS IS
EMERGENCY
ACTION PLAN**

INSIDE:

| | |
|---|-----|
| County Emergency Action Plan Tailgate Resources | 3 |
| Key Emergency Equipment | 3 |
| Training Calen- dar | 5 |
| Effective Emergency Action Plans | 6-7 |
| Emergency Exit Routes | 9 |
| Forklifts and Pedestrians | 10 |
| Shanon Shares | 10 |
| COVID-19 Symptoms | 11 |
| Preventing Cold Stress | 11 |
| National Radon Action Month | 13 |

Planning is Power

The actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical. Prompt warning and proper response can save lives. When an emergency occurs, adrenaline, fear, and confusion can quickly take over, increasing the likelihood of injuries. To prepare for workplace emergencies, the County uses facility-specific emergency action plans (EAPs). EAPs are created to facilitate and organize actions taken during workplace emergencies. Important information such as evacuation routes, shelter-in-place procedures, how to respond to medical emergencies, and where to locate important safety equipment like fire extinguishers, AEDs and first aid kits can minimize injuries and facility damage. Familiarize yourself with your facility's EAP so you can be prepared when an emergency occurs!

~Kayvan Vafa



A Step in the Wright Direction

by Norman Wright

Saturday, November 28, 1942, the Boston College Eagles squared off across the gridiron in Fenway Park from the Crusaders of the College of the Holy Cross. For the AP # 1 ranked Eagles, this was the last game in an otherwise perfect 8-0 season, outscoring opponents 249 to 19, and a victory would ensure



Boston College

an invitation to the Sugar Bowl on New Year's Day 1943. They were highly favored over the 5-4 Crusaders. Boston College planned to celebrate a 9-0 season that night at the famous Cocoonut Grove nightclub in anticipation of their victory.

Nine years after the end of Prohibition, nightclubs like the Cocoonut Grove had become popular. The "Grove" was located in the Bay Village neighborhood of Boston, near the Navy Yard. The nightclub gave patrons a South Seas-style ambiance in food, hospitality, and entertain-

Wright Direction *continued...*



Cocoanut Grove 1942

“Preparation is less costly than learning through tragedy”

- Max Mayfield, former Director of the National Hurricane Center

ment, as well as the occasional appearance of music artists or movie stars gracing the club.

That night, over 1,000 guests packed into the Grove, 540 over the nightclub’s fire occupancy limit.

At about 10:15 p.m., a small fire broke out in the Melody Lounge, in the basement. The fire quickly spread to the upper floor dining room, igniting the decorative palm trees. There was a loss of electricity, and the thick smoke greatly impaired visibility. The only alarm system was the cries of “FIRE” from patrons. Tables were overturned, blocking aisles. Only two of the six exits in the 10,200 square foot facility were

freely accessible to patrons. Many of the employees escaped through exits not accessible to the public, leaving guests behind.

Some of the doors were blocked, doors with panic bars were locked with secondary locks making the exits useless. Those available to the guests were quickly blocked by fire. The main entrance, a revolving door, malfunctioned, trapping the nightclub patrons inside. The Grove did not have a fire suppression system or an evacuation plan.

The most effective way to handle an emergency such as the fire in the Grove is to prepare in advance by creating an Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The Division of Occupational Safety & Health (Cal/OSHA) requires written Emergency Action Plans for businesses with more than ten employees (Title 8, California Code of Regulations, Section 3220). Beyond the requirement, there are many reasons for having an EAP. Emergencies can happen at any time.

The main reason to have an EAP is to do as much as possible to keep employees and the public safe in an emergency. The confusion in an emergency will worsen a bad situation and put lives at risk if we aren’t prepared.

The best time to handle an emergency is before it ever takes place. Before creating an EAP, you need to analyze your workplace and identify potential



(SEE WRIGHT DIRECTION PAGE 4)

County Emergency Action Plan Tailgate Resources

Emergency
Evacuations

Bomb Threat

Life Slider

Active Shooter

[Safety Tailgates](#) | [Contra Costa County Intranet, CA \(insidecontracosta.org\)](#)

Key Emergency Equipment

During an emergency at a County facility, it is important to know the location(s) of key safety equipment. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, workers may need to quickly access this equipment to assist other employees, extinguish small fires, or provide first-aid. Since the availability and location of emergency equipment varies from facility to facility, it is important to review your facility's available emergency supplies and their locations so you can be prepared and react quickly. Prompt response in an emergency can not only help minimize the impacts these emergencies can cause, but also reduce the severity of injuries when prompt first-aid is provided. Emergency equipment which may be available at your facility include those shown below.

Flashlights

Portable Fire
Extinguishers

Evacuation
Equipment (e.g.,
evacuation
chairs)

Food and Water
Supplies

First-Aid Kits

Radios and
Two-Way Radios

Automated
External
Defibrillators
(AED)

Wright Direction *continued...*

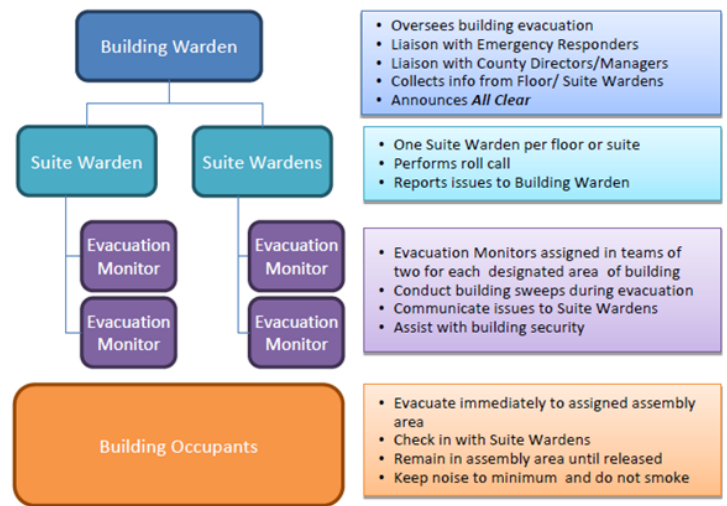
hazards. These can vary depending on the type of services provided at the workplace. Some EAPs may address handling hazardous materials. Some will need to deal with buildings constructed under older buildings and life safety codes. Some will require strategies for natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes.

Planning will differ depending on the type of emergency. Planning for a flood or earthquake will differ from planning for a fire or workplace violence incident. Some of the essential preparations will be similar for multiple issues. Always provide steps for ensuring safety, whether sheltering in place or evacuating. Always have a clear and effective plan for communicating with everyone who could be affected.

Be sure to investigate what hazards you may face, how to stay safe during the emergency, and how it may affect operation afterward. Consideration should be given to property loss and continuity of operation.

Once potential threats and their effects are identified, you should develop responses for the hazards. Keep in mind:

- Designate individuals (Building, Floor, Suite wardens and evacuation monitors) in charge to follow and get others to follow the EAP. If there is more than one department at a facility, make sure the hierarchy is clear. Employees must understand who is in charge and has authority during an emergency.



- Ensure the methods for reporting fires and other emergencies are clear: i.e., dialing 911 or 9-911, calling an internal emergency number, pulling a manual fire alarm, and what procedures change depending on the type of emergency.
- Create evacuation policies and paths with alternate routes that are clear and easy to follow and a way to account for employees once they have evacuated.
- Develop procedures to be followed by employees who remain to operate critical facility operations before they evacuate (if applicable).
- Implement procedures for those who cannot

(SEE WRIGHT DIRECTION PAGE 8)

Important Safety Training Dates for December 2021

NEW! The County's custom class "CCC COVID-19 Safety in the Workplace" is now available on Vector Solutions. This is required for all County staff. The new "COVID-19 Field Safety Training" is also available for staff that conduct field work.

Additional Required COVID-19 Training in Vector Solutions:

- TAILGATES - CCC - COVID-19 Safety Training
- TAILGATES - CCC - Emergency Evacuation Procedures during COVID-19

Required for Departmental Personnel Contacts in Vector Solutions

- COVID-19 - Reporting Positive Results to Public Health

General Coronavirus Training in Vector Solutions:

- Courses - Coronavirus 101 - What You Need to Know (Newest Version)
- Courses - Coronavirus 102 - Preparing Your Household
- Courses - Coronavirus 103 - Managing Stress and Anxiety
- Courses - Coronavirus 104 - Transitioning to a Remote Workforce
- Courses - Coronavirus 105 - Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Workplace

General Safety Training:

- CCC Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) Training
- CCC Wildfire Smoke Safety for Employees (Annual requirement)
- CCC Driver Safety Training
- CCC Office Ergonomics Awareness Training
- CCC Emergency Evacuation Procedures - All County
- CCC HSD 2021 Workplace Violence Prevention
- TAILGATE - Workplace violence
- TAILGATE - Shelter in Place Procedures - Violence

**Hybrid CPR Classes
Available Now!**

**Check Vector Solutions for
Dates and Instructions**



Check the Vector Solutions page periodically for new 2022 Safety Training Dates. New classes, workshops, and dates will be posted SOON !

Log into the Vector Solutions website at www.targetsolutions.com/ccc for the full list of ONLINE, ZOOM, and HYBRID classes!

Effective Emergency Action Plans

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is a written procedure detailing the appropriate response to various types of emergencies. Facility-specific EAPs are an essential component of the County's safety procedures. Creating an EAP and training employees on how to follow it can greatly reduce employee injuries, property damage, and can ensure the safety of visitors in the event of an emergency. No two EAPs will be identical and they should be tailored to each facility. In general, EAPs should contain three key elements:



Procedures for emergencies within the facility (e.g., fire, active threats, power outages, etc.)

The main goal is to get everyone out of harms way.

To achieve this, staff should be aware of the fastest and safest way out of the building. Post accurate evacuation maps at key locations throughout the facility

Ensure that evacuation procedures are easily accessible to customers or visitors inside of the building. Having a broad understanding of the layout of a building can help staff prepare for unanticipated detours along the most common emergency exits



Procedures for emergencies outside the facility (e.g., wildfires, earthquakes, lightning, etc.)

In most cases, when an emergency starts outside of the building, the safest thing to do is find a safe place within the building (shelter in place)

Most often, emergencies outside of the building will be weather-related or natural disasters like a wildfire or earthquake, but can also include aggressive individuals

These events provide different levels of warning before they strike, so it's important to be prepared to respond quickly



Procedures for medical emergencies (e.g., heart attacks, seizures, etc.)

If someone inside the facility is injured or having a medical emergency, an EAP should be initiated quickly

Staff should be prepared to respond to a wide range of plausible health scares such as a heart attack, seizure, and more

Depending on the emergency, local emergency medical services may be contacted. Be sure that these authorities will have easy access to the injured person and they'll be able to exit the building quickly when it is time to do so

Effective Emergency Action Plans *continued...*

When creating, reviewing, or updating an EAP, keep the following to in mind to ensure it is effective:

EAP Availability: Since electricity is often not available during an emergency, do not store EAPs or associated phone lists in electronic form only; make sure there are hard copies readily available.



Utilities and Equipment: List the location of important utility shutoffs, and consider including photos of them so that they can be located quickly and easily. Make sure access to shutoffs is not blocked. Include the location of any tools or keys needed to access the shutoffs (it does no good knowing where the shutoff is if it can't actually be shut off). List any equipment or machinery that needs to be shut down in an emergency and who has responsibility for doing so.

Contact Lists: Keep contact lists up-to-date and consider asking Human Resources to update contact lists. They are generally in a better position than other administrative personnel when it comes to having access to employee contact phone numbers (and they also know when employees leave or move to different positions).

Visitors: Include provisions for visitors to your facility: How do you account for their whereabouts and who is in charge of ensuring they know how to evacuate?

Authority: If necessary, include plan provisions regarding who has authority to allow employees back into buildings or restart operations.

Variations: Since emergencies don't always happen on Mondays at 8 a.m., when writing your plan, account for variations in emergency procedures that account for different shifts or days of the week (e.g., fewer or no staff at your facility, fewer supervisors, darkness, etc.).

Special Equipment: List the locations of special equipment (e.g., personal protective equipment to be used in the event of a chemical release) and emergency supplies (food, water, etc. in the event employees are stranded at a facility). Periodically inspect inventories to verify locations and that equipment is in working order.



Review and Practice!

Each department should regularly review their EAP to ensure accuracy and workability. Sometimes a plan looks good on paper but may not work in real life. Conduct practice evacuation drills to allow employees to become familiar with emergency procedures, egress routes, and assembly locations so they will respond appropriately during an emergency. Include outside resources, such as fire departments, when possible. Afterwards, gather management and employees to evaluate the drill's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

Wright Direction *continued...*

evacuate. Identify individuals that need special assistance and safe shelter-in-place locations; have ways to convey information to first responders when they arrive.

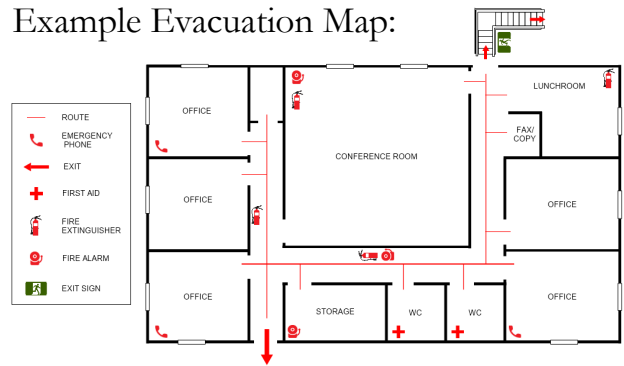
- Provide clear communication during and immediately after any dangerous incident.
- Note who can perform medical care, from first aid to CPR, and make sure they are in the proper positions to do so.

The EAP provides no benefit if it is simply filed away. It needs to be shared with employees. Every employee must be trained on the EAP and follow it in an emergency. Training needs to be provided annually with periodic exercises to follow the procedures.

The EAP needs to be subject to an ongoing review for improvements; periodically and when changes are made to the facility or operations.

On November 28, 1942, 492 individuals died in the Cocoanut Grove within 15 minutes, trying to escape the building. Because of this tragedy, changes were made to the fire safety and building codes and revolving door designs. The Boston College football team lost to Holy Cross, 12 to 55. The loss caused the Eagles to cancel their victory party at the Grove, possibly saving the lives of players and fans. The loss kept them from the Sugar Bowl, leaving them to play against the University of Alabama in the Orange Bowl, where they lost 21 to 37.

Example Evacuation Map:



County [Evacuation Planning Guide](#)

Vector Solutions Training:

- ⇒ Emergency Evacuation Procedures – All County
- ⇒ Emergency Evacuation Team Training – All County

Emergency Exit Routes

Emergency exit routes are important because they provide a clear, safe way to evacuate a building in case of a crisis or disaster. First responders such as fire or police may also utilize emergency exits to enter a building during a disaster or crisis. Identifying and maintaining emergency exits and emergency exit routes are an important part of your Emergency Action Plan (EAP).



California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) defines an emergency exit route as a continuous and unobstructed path of exit travel from any point within a workplace to a place of safety. The three parts of an exit route are provided below:

- 1) **Exit access** - The portion of the route that leads to an exit. Cal/OSHA requires that an exit access must be at least 28 inches wide at all points.
- 2) **Exit** - The exit is generally separated from other areas to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.
- 3) **Exit discharge** - Leads directly outside or to a street, walkway, refuge area, public way, or open space with access to the outside.

Exit routes and exit access (e.g., fire doors) must be clear and unblocked to allow for quick and safe exit in case of an emergency. Blocking and obstructing exit doors and routes will create delay, panic, and confusion in the case of an emergency and acts as a safety hazard. Cal/OSHA regulations require that exit routes are unobstructed by materials, equipment, locked doors, or dead-end corridors and also include proper lighting and other elements.

EVACUATION MAPS provide important information to staff and visitors. They are a simple building floorplan with easily understood information. These maps contain information such as the locations of key emergency equipment (e.g., portable fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, etc.), evacuation assembly points, and evacuation routes. They should be placed at key locations throughout the facility such as lobbies and conference rooms. Review and update maps as needed, particularly after major changes in a building or office layout, so occupants and visitors have clear and accurate evacuation routes.



Forklift and Pedestrian Safety

Forklifts are an integral part of many work areas and can be dangerous if we're not careful. With pedestrian traffic in the work area things can get tricky.

If you are a pedestrian entering a forklift use zone, please enter with caution. Look both ways before entering or crossing an aisleway and never stand in the pathway of travel of a forklift. Additionally, never assume a forklift driver can see you, especially if they are moving a load. Wait for the forklift to safely pass before moving forward.

If you are a forklift operator, always be aware of your surroundings. Obey speed limits and slow down and honk when approaching a blind corner. Remember to also honk often while moving around. Using your horn often will alert pedestrians and other employees of your location and can assist with keeping all involved safe.

When parking a forklift, always lower the forks, set the brake, and remove the keys before walking away.

Only employees who have been trained and are authorized by the county to operate a forklift may do so. Operating a forklift without the appropriate training can lead to serious injury and severe consequences. Let's work together to keep each other safe!



**Keep
Clear
When
Forklifts
are
Near!**

Shanon Shares...Take Action!

by Shanon Winston

In a past job, I was asked to perform an assessment of a structure located on a higher level that employees would utilize as a part of their job. There were no guards or platforms around the structure as required for its height, so near miss falls were prevalent. I performed the assessment, including measurements and pictures of the location and equipment; referenced the necessary regulations to support the requirements, and documented my professional opinion to support my recommendations. My director at the time sent me out to the location to fix the issue, and even stated, "we sent you to receive your certification on this,



so go forth and show us what you learned." Now, of course, I was flattered and nervous at the same time. Being newly certified does not automatically mean that you are an expert; experience plays a huge part in "perfecting" assessments (if perfecting was ever such a thing!)

I was very self-aware at that time that it would do me well to speak with a few more experienced co-workers to review my assessment report. So, I went forth in confidence, gathered a team of key players, who had

(SEE SHANON SHARES PAGE 12)

| Comparing Cold, Flu, Allergies, and COVID-19 | | | | |
|--|------------------|---|---|---|
| Symptoms | Cold | Flu | Airborne Allergy | COVID-19 |
| Fever | Rare | Usual, high (100–102 °F), sometimes higher, especially in young children); lasts 3–4 days | Never | Common |
| Headache | Uncommon | Common | Uncommon | Common |
| General Aches, Pains | Slight | Usual; often severe | Never | Common |
| Fatigue, Weakness | Sometimes | Usual, can last up to 3 weeks | Sometimes | Common |
| Extreme Exhaustion | Never | Usual, at the beginning of the illness | Never | Common |
| Stuffy, Runny Nose | Common | Sometimes | Common | Common |
| Sneezing | Usual | Sometimes | Usual | Rarely |
| Sore Throat | Common | Sometimes | Sometimes | Common |
| Cough | Common | Common, can become severe | Sometimes | Common, dry cough |
| Chest Discomfort | Mild to moderate | Common | Rare, except for those with allergic asthma | Common. Can cause trouble breathing or persistent pain / pressure in the chest (seek immediate emergency care). |
| Loss of Taste or Smell | Rarely | Rarely | Rarely | Common |

Preventing Cold Stress Cold Stress Risk Factors include dressing improperly, wet clothing or skin, and exhaustion.

Cold temperatures, higher wind speeds, and wet winter weather conditions can combine and cause outdoor workers to experience cold stress. Protection strategies include:

- Dressing properly in layers with good footwear
- Knowing the signs and symptoms of cold stress
- Monitoring yourself and co-workers for cold stress signs and symptoms
- Drinking warm, sweetened fluids (no alcohol) throughout the day
- Knowing the emergency procedures to respond to a cold stress incident

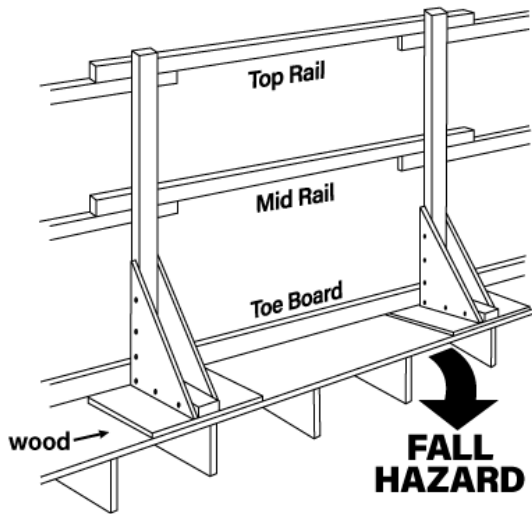
See the [OSHA Cold Stress Quick Card](#) for more information.



Shanon Shares (continued)

shared responsibility over the location and equipment, and demonstrated “what I learned.” After showing, talking, and confirming that all understood and agreed, I was met with answers like “Yep!”, “Got it!”, and “That helps a lot!” What was interesting about the discussion was that everyone, except me, ended the conversation stating the best way to handle the situation was to *leave it alone*.

Even more interesting -- they all shook hands with me afterwards and stated, “thanks for helping us to fix this issue, this took us forever to figure out!”



What?! I made it brief and to the point that a safety control was needed *now*. I also mentioned an after action report would be sent to all involved. How did we get from, “That helps a lot!,” to let’s leave it alone, in 5 seconds? A little back story, some of my recommendations were to close off the location and use an alternative route if possible and until permanent guarding and platforms could be installed, to close off the location and install temporary guarding and platforms if immediate use of the location was required (still the goal was to eventually install permanent guarding), or to utilize personal fall protection. All of these were

in the order of most effective and most practical, and all heads in the group were nodding, faces smiling...

I left the scene without pushing the issue and took my assessment findings back to a few expert co-workers to review and confirm if I was wrong. I let them know the entire team mentioned the issue would be left alone. I also mentioned sarcastically to one co-worker that I was not sure if they heard what I said. My co-workers reviewed and agreed that I should send the report to the assessment team and copy them. I was told by my director that the assessment would be taken from there.

Fast forward to several weeks later, a near-miss occurred during a routine drill exiting this structure. I was asked by my director to assist my co-workers and this same assessment team with installation of temporary guarding, and plan to install permanent guarding to this structure. I was also given the near-miss report that moved this action plan forward: one of the employees on the assessment team jumped from the structure to a lower level and tripped and rolled to the edge of the lower level. We all agreed that once guarding was installed, we would review the emergency response procedures for evacuating such structures.

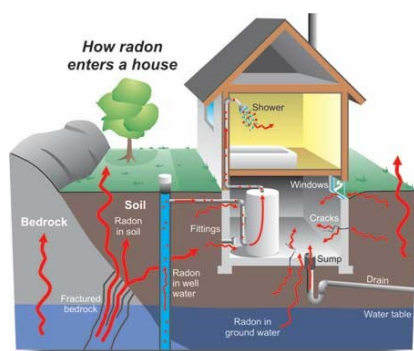
I learned from this situation back in the day not to allow a serious safety concern to be left alone and on hold. Get additional eyes on the issue, document observations and findings, and get the issue handled to avoid a serious injury. Work with your teams, safety coordinators, leadership and ensure that you have a plan and process for abating such issues. Also, try very hard not to jump from high structures to a lower level or to the ground...



3-Point Contact

National Radon Action Month

The United States (U.S.) Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated January as National Radon Action Month. Radon is produced from a natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. You can't see, smell or taste radon, and the only way to know if a building has a radon problem is to test for it. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in America and claims the lives of about 21,000 Americans each year.

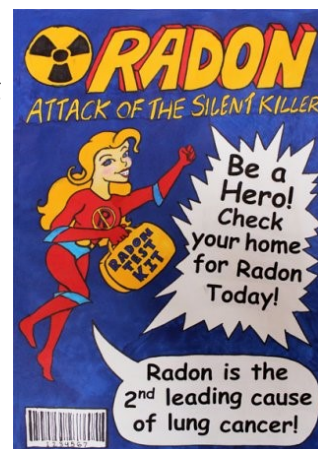


Radon can enter homes, offices, schools and other buildings through various pathways, including those shown in the graphic to the left.

Exposure to radon is a preventable health risk and testing radon levels in your home can help prevent unnecessary exposure. The EPA and the U.S. Surgeon General urge all Americans to protect their health by testing their homes and other buildings for radon.

Test for Radon: Testing your house for radon is easy. If your house has a radon problem, it can be fixed. Fixing a radon problem reduces the risk of lung cancer for you and your family. A simple test will tell you if your home has a high radon level. Most radon tests last between 2 and 7 days. It's as easy as opening a package and putting the test kit in the right place. After sending the test kit back to the address in the package, the company will send your radon test results in about 2 weeks.

If a high radon level is detected in your home, you can take steps to fix the problem to protect yourself and your family! Protection methods include sealing cracks in floors and walls and increasing ventilation through sub-slab depressurization using pipes and fans. You can also call your state radon office to find qualified radon mitigators in your area. Also local companies with radon mitigators are in the phone book or online. The cost to reduce radon depends on how your home was built and how you use it. Most homes can be fixed for about the same cost as other common home repairs.



RISK MANAGEMENT
SAFETY AND
LOSS CONTROL

Dedicated to
preventing
injuries and
illnesses.
**CONTACT
US!**

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925-335-1400

Safety Newsletter E-mail:

Norman.Wright@riskm.cccounty.us

Safety and Loss Control **Intranet Site:**

<https://www.insidecontracosta.org/469/Safety-and-Loss-Control>

Obtaining Radon Test Kits

- Buy a test kit online or at your local home improvement store. Many kits are priced under \$25
- Order a test kit at www.sosradon.org or by calling 1-800-SOS-RADON
- Request a test kit from your state radon program, which also has information on radon testing companies and laboratories in your area. Visit <https://www.epa.gov/radon/find-information-about-local-radon-zones-and-state-contact-information> for more information