

Alberta Radon Network - Inaugural meeting June 8, 2016

Date: June 8, 2016

Meeting Description: Alberta Radon Network – Inaugural meeting

Location: Rm 202, Canada Place

In Attendance: Pam Warkentin, CARST and C-NRPP; (chair); Christine Fok, Health Canada; Colin Dumais, RadonWest, Karin Dumais, RadonWest; CARST; Curt Lamontagne, C5, BOMA, IFMA; Gary Hughes, Alberta Labour; Barry Obondo, Radontech; Keith Jansen, AB-CHBA; Joan Maissoneuve, AB-CHBA; Dr. Juan Antonio Garcia, University of Calgary; Trevor Elms, Radon Gas Removal; Victor Hikmax, AB Infrastructure; Monte Weber, AB Lung Association; Colin Wildgrube, AB Infrastructure;

Item #	Topics Discussed	Action By:
1.0	<p>Introductions</p> <p>– took some time to have each present introduce themselves and the current work they are doing in radon.</p> <p>Pam Warkentin, Executive Director C-NRPP and Admin Assistant for CARST.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking to help provinces develop provincial groups for sharing ideas and information - Connect stakeholders together - Look at opportunities, challenges and put together items to address in the coming year <p>Christine Fok, Health Canada</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Just moved onto the radon file; looking to learn lots as radon is new area of expertise for her <p>Colin Dumais, RadonWest, certified with C-NRPP and CARST Board of Directors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair of the 2017 CARST Radon Conference to be held in Alberta - Working with the University of Calgary on a research survey of homes in the area - Mitigator and trainer in Alberta <p>Karin Dumais, RadonWest, certified with C-NRPP and CARST member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works in office for Radonwest and helps co-ordinates training <p>Dr. Juan Antonio Garcia – Family doctor, trains other family doctors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerned about the lack of awareness on radon; currently radon is not being taught in the health curriculums - Feels that it should be part of prevention counselling with family physicians - Working on writing articles in magazines - Creating practical tools to help raise awareness, including videos for waiting rooms 	

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- Would like to create a website to compile information about radon for doctors

Curt LaMontagne – C5Plus, certified with C-NRPP, on board of IFMA and BOMA

- Shared about work that BOMA has been doing with the new version of BOMA Best that will be coming out next month; it's a point based system for evaluating buildings; radon will be provided with 6 points which is a significant emphasis for radon; predicts that this will raise interest in radon testing among BOMA members
- Will be speaking on radon at BUILDEX which will happen the first week of November in Calgary, they also have a conference in Edmonton in March
- C5Plus is an environmental consultant; only evaluate commercial buildings; include radon screening in IAQs
- Working on a radon course for architects and engineers
- Also developing a course for facility managers
- Working on CRNCH Training (C-NRPP certification course for new construction)
- Provides online IAQs which include radon information
- IFMA is looking to increase awareness to members

Joan Maissonneuve, AB-CHBA

- Single family and multi-family members
- Working with members to help them understand radon
- Looking to get members more education
- Challenges for members to get materials for sub-slab systems
- Sealing is a challenge and there is a confusion between safety code officers and builders
- Officers are enforcing the code – narrowly; providing some challenges
- More changes to AB building code are coming which will further increase the tightness of the air envelope in homes; looking to understand how the shift in ventilation may affect radon levels in homes

Keith Jansen, AB-CHBA

- Concerned about granular layer as gravel is often moist in the winter
- Also concerned about the cost of supplies is a challenge for builders

Trevor Elms, certified with C-NRPP

- Works on mitigation systems; created and researched some innovative methods for radon in new construction and mitigation
- Also concerned about issues in new building code

Monte Weber, CFO, AB Lung Association

- Looking at BC Lung's model with RadonAware; trying to determine the course of action that Alberta Lung should be following for radon
- Looking at conducting testing to provide more data on radon levels in homes

Gary Hughes, AB Labour, radiation protection specialist

- On 2006 radon working group; on FTTPRC
- Provincially tested buildings in 2007-2008
- Not a high profile issue in Alberta
- Have a bulletin (AB Labour) online called, Radon in the Workplace

Barry Obondo, Radontech; certified with C-NRPP

- Trying to bring information to homeowners
- Working on online awareness
- Working towards helping correct inaccurate information
- Interested in developing a knowledge exchange and integrating information;

Victor Hikmax, – AB Infrastructure

- Building and environmental specialists
- Working on developing plan to have all buildings tested for radon;
- Including specs for building codes; including certified radon professionals including schools and hospitals

Colin Wildgrube, – AB Infrastructure

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs stated that radon rough-ins should be installed in all new buildings; design of rough-in should be designed by a certified mitigation professional; an architect will have to hire a specialist to review the drawings
- Following the EPA 6.25 guide for prescriptive measures for rough-ins
- Designer can suggest alternatives
- Doing retesting of existing buildings
- Have some equipment for short term testing
- Will be developing a technical bulletin for in-house knowledge
- Will also develop a communication plan to get the word out to project managers

Dr. Aaron Goodarzi, Charbonneau Cancer Institute at the University of Calgary

- By email
- At the Charbonneau Cancer Institute at the University of Calgary we have been collaborating with the Calgary-area based RadonWest over the past few years to assess household radon in the "Greater Calgary Area", collecting household radon levels from 90 day winter period tests alongside numerous home metrics including age of home, furnace type, insulation, sump-pump presence, etc. All data is collected by researchers in a semi-anonymous manner, meaning the readings are linked only to a postal district. Thanks to some media exposure and a notable front page Calgary Herald article in late January of 2016, we anticipate approximately 3,000 readings to be completed by end of summer 2016. Collin Dumais from RadonWest can speak to specific details about this.
- We aim to write up these results as a scientific article, in a paper that also includes a full assessment (by the O'Brien of Public Health, UofC) of the economic impact of radon-induced lung cancer to the health care system in the province of Alberta AND a systematic geologic soil sampling (for radon) across the Calgary area linked to areas of identified high household radon, conducted by experts from UofC Geosciences. These latter research projects are already underway. The primary conclusions of these results will also be written into a more "public-friendly" report which we hope to publish alongside the Alberta Lung Association in time for November 2016, and announce in a series of media events during Lung Awareness month.
- Finally, in March of 2016, senior members of the Charbonneau Cancer Institute met with the Associate Minister for Health (for Alberta) and an MLA who is a member of the governments standing committee for families,

the specific topic being radon-gas and cancer prevention strategies. This meeting was initiated by the Minister, and what we had to say seemed to be well received. A letter to the minister summarizing this meeting and including multiple recommendations from Dr. Goodarzi to the government on how to tackle radon in Alberta was sent in early April and is currently being assessed within the provincial government.

2.0 **Identified Issues for Agenda to discuss (based on priorities of those present)**

- Connect with NGO's (specifically the Lung Association) to encourage partnerships and collaboration
- Training (CRNCH); train project managers (infrastructure); mitigation; need more mitigators; large building mitigation; more easy access to exam writing; discussion of compaction of the radon rock
- CARST Conference 2017
- Find out what is happening in other provinces
- Correct misinformation; new construction; individuals don't know everything;
- Discuss radon action level – EPA lowered now to 74 Bq/m³; WHO 100 Bq/m³
- Lack of awareness among homeowner's
- Resources for continued communication; online based;
- Clarify testing in public buildings
- Information sharing; new construction; need more research;
- Building code technical solutions;
- Understanding issues with modular classrooms
- Short term/long term discussion
- Schedule future meetings;
- Plan future workshop
- Encourage policy makers to keep open communication on test data in public buildings/schools
- Policy changes

3.0 **Future Meetings:**

- Set meetings at 2 months apart; topics will be decided in advance; meetings will be by conference call or web-connect unless it is decided that a face-to-face meeting would be better considering the content/topic for the meeting
- Additional committees may meet in the interim to work on specific projects and report back to full group at the following meetings

- Next Meeting: August 10, 10-11am MST
October 12, 10-11am MST
December 7, 10-11am MST

Method of Communication:

- It was determined that the best method would be through email and a page on a website; Pam will look into developing a page on the CARST website which could host meeting minutes; and applicable documents
- Pam will continue to be the central organizer until an Alberta organization decides to take the lead role
- Information will also be sent around by email

Two main topics were identified as for specific discussion at today's meeting from Section 2.0 Identified Issues.

Technical Solutions:

- Parkades and basements
- How do you get safety codes accepting proper variances; including performance based solutions; currently only accept if there is a PENG stamp; work done above code currently is at risk of not being accepted
- Communicate with Safety officers through meetings
- Create engineered solutions
- Crushed gravel/radon rock (compact or not compact)
- Alternative materials options
- CCMC #s
- Working level solutions in measuring workplaces/occupational settings
- Public building measurement guide needs clarification; more details or concrete requirements

Correcting Misinformation/Increasing outreach

- Public awareness in Alberta is still really low; we need to look for ways to increase this
- Would like to provide public with proper education so they can make good decisions on renovations/budgeting and protecting their health
- Run a CRNCH course for Building officials
- Run a CRNCH course for Builders
- Encourage testing after occupancy of new homes
- Make sure information being circulated is appropriate/correct to not confuse public with variances among different sources of information
- Provide information on how to test/clear information/audience targeted information
- Educate architects and engineers

Research:

- Mitigation options/performance solutions
- ASTM 1465 (includes 4 performance approaches)
- Identifying critical forced pathways
- Research on sub-slab seals; techniques
- Research survey of house

Workshop Ideas:

- Educating safety codes officers on what to inspect and additional options that may be included (over and above code)
- Critical pieces of the system
- Occupational Health
- See attached sample of agenda from Nova Scotia workshop and BC workshop

Supporting Documents: (requested or referred to in discussions)

- Health Canada's [Cross-Canada Survey](#)
- Building Code Research
 - [BCLung Radon Report 4](#)
 - Radon Demonstration an Application of Building Code Changes in Winnipeg - attached
- [Ministry of Labour – Radon in the Workplace](#)
- [Municipal Act Changes in Ontario](#)
- [Guelph Radon Mitigation Program](#)
- [BC Building Codes](#)
- [C-NRPP list of professionals](#)
- [CARST page on Information and Research](#)
- [CARST page on past news articles](#)
- Radon Aware and its Research Articles
 - [RadonAware](#) (BC Lung Association)**
 - [Castlegar Project](#)
 - [Prince George Radon Project](#)
 - [A Model for Radon Testing and Mitigation in Affordable Housing](#)
 - [Shared Services Radon Testing Pilot Project](#)