

THE  LUNG ASSOCIATION™

The Ontario Lung Association  
& CARST

Changing the Face of  
Radon in Ontario

April 26, 2016

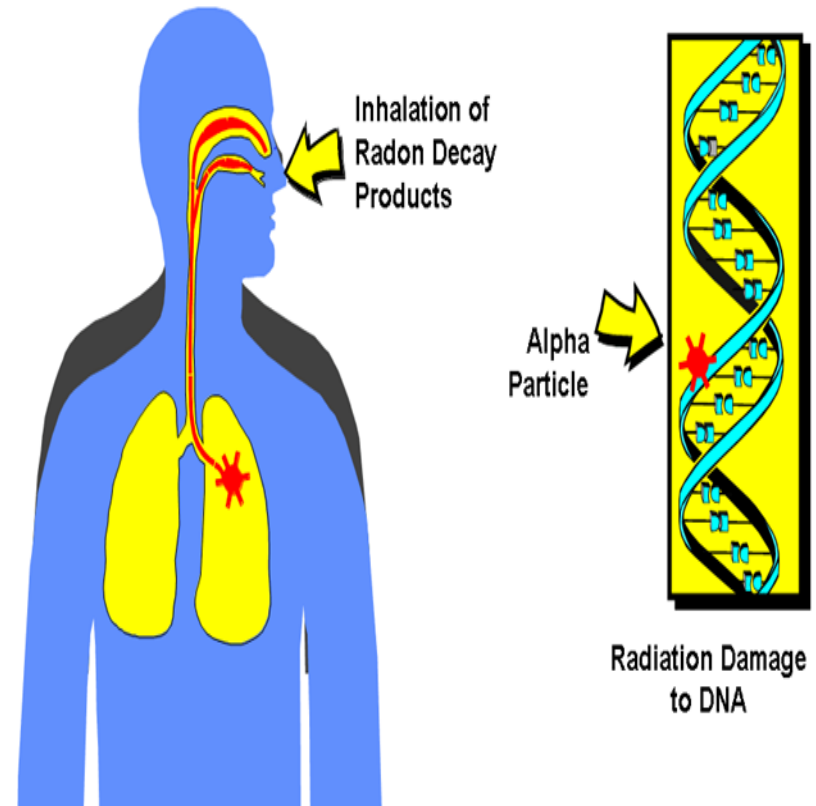
# Ontario Lung Association and Radon Policy

- Among Canada's longest standing, most respected not-for-profit health promotion organizations
- Leader in the prevention and control of chronic lung disease, asthma, tobacco cessation and prevention, and air quality
- Invested more than \$27 million into lung health research carried out in Ontario
- Leader in radon education, awareness and radon policy



# Radon & Lungs

- Primary exposure through inhalation can damage cells and tissue in the lungs
- Living in a home with high radon levels for many years puts you at risk for lung cancer, and smokers are at a much higher risk
- Based on a Health Canada survey, radon exposure causes 16% of lung cancer deaths a year (3,200 Canadians)
- 850 Ontarians die each year, due to radon related illness.



# Radon Update & Current Legislation

- CARST & the Ontario Lung Association join forces to advance Radon awareness in Ontario and to help save lives
- Began working with Mike Holmes Sr. and Jr.
- Public Service Announcements (with partnership/sponsorship from Radiation Safety Institute of Canada)
- Joint letters to Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP's)
- Queen's Park Lobby Day
- Hired Pathway Group. A government relations firm to help with targeting
- Partnering at Association of Municipalities Conference
- Focused advocacy campaign directed at specific MPP's and Ministers:
  1. Minister Ted McMeekin, Municipal Affairs & Housing
  2. Minister Kevin Flynn, Labour
  3. Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer
  4. Senior Minister staff and the Senior Policy Adviser in the Premiers office.
  5. Members of Cabinet
  6. Joining forces with like-minded Associations

# Update cont....

Because of our partnership and early focus we are now seeing results, BUT...we have a way to go still.

## **Radon and Lung Health Summit**

- Hosted the first ever Radon and Lung Health Summit with Radiation Safety Institute of Canada
- Report submitted to Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer and Minister of Labour

## **Testing ground contact residential units**

- CARST and the Ontario Lung Association produced a technical report and suggestions
- Working on advocating recommendations to all Ontario Cabinet Ministers and the Premier

## **Changes to the Ontario Building Code**

- CARST and Ontario Lung Association submitted recommendations to the Municipal Affairs and Housing

# Ontarians Need Your Help

- ✓ Consider signing a support letter
- ✓ Speak with your MPP
- ✓ Other ideas?

- ✓ Support testing ground contact units
- ✓ Call for committee hearings on Radon PMB
- ✓ Other ideas?

## Challenges

Potential Cabinet shuffle resulting in a new Minister and Staff

Push back from external stakeholders such as: FROPO, building associations, etc.

Lack of awareness

Lack of financial support

# Key Messages

- ✓ Introduce the radon issue, especially to those who smoke, and inform them about the importance of testing for radon
- ✓ Smokers have an even greater risk of lung cancer due to combined exposure to radon and smoke
- ✓ Testing is simple and inexpensive – anyone can do it, or you can hire a certified radon professional to do the test for you
- ✓ With new research showing radon causes more lung cancer cases, it is especially important for Ontarians to be aware and test their homes
- ✓ Radon can be found in any home, and can accumulate to high levels leading to an increased risk of lung cancer
- ✓ Each homeowner must decide what level of risk they are willing to accept.
- ✓ Test every home and workplace for radon
- ✓ Save lives. REMEMBER 850 Ontarians die each year from radon related illness

THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?