

IMMEDIATE:
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Federal Plan to Protect People from Lung Cancer in Housing is Step Forward; Fight Against Radon Still Lags Far Behind its Risk to the Public

WASHINGTON—Statement of Charles D. Connor, president and CEO of the American Lung Association:

“Today, nine federal agencies—the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the General Services Administration, and the departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and Veterans Affairs—unveiled a [joint plan](#) to fight the leading cause of lung cancer in nonsmokers: exposure to radon. The American Lung Association supports their cooperative effort as an important next step in reducing the annual toll of 21,000 deaths from lung cancer caused by radon. With the scope of the problem this large, we call on these agencies to move even more aggressively to take steps already well within their authority to reduce the exposure of the public to this lethal substance.

“The gap between what we know about the dangers from radon and how we have responded has grown over the years. Radon is an invisible, naturally-occurring carcinogen in the air that concentrates in homes, schools, and other buildings—including daycare facilities. We have known since the mid-1980s that radon in homes poses a life-threatening risk to the people who live there. Congress passed the Indoor Radon Abatement Act in 1988 calling for strong federal action. We have seen that the federal response has been far less than is necessary, even in the 7.5 million homes, schools, and daycare facilities where the federal government already is involved. We are pleased to see the beginnings of a stronger federal response.

“We call on these agencies to deepen their commitment to reducing radon exposure to the public as they continue their planning. The federal government has a particular responsibility to provide healthy homes—protected against this carcinogen—to low-income families, military families, and anyone who is purchasing a home with federal financing or insurance.

“The American Lung Association has long partnered with the EPA to help educate the public and fight for stronger tools to reduce radon in homes across the country. We look forward to expanding our work with these federal agencies.”

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Editor’s Note: To learn more about radon, please visit: <http://www.lungusa.org/healthy-air/home/resources/radon.html>.

About the American Lung Association

Now in its second century, the American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. With your generous support, the American Lung Association is “Fighting for Air” through research, education and advocacy. For more information about the American Lung Association, a Charity Navigator Four Star Charity and holder of the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Guide Seal, or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or visit www.LungUSA.org.