

Radon Tee: World Trek 2010



Dear Radon Tee Enthusiast,

Welcome – we’re excited you want to join the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 movement. This year, the project is harnessing the power of social media by posting photos and videos of ordinary people appearing with the Radon Tee, a special t-shirt designed for Cancer Survivors Against Radon (CanSAR™) by a group of eighth grade students from Illinois. The Radon Tee has trekked around the world and thousands have joined the movement to support radon awareness and learn about the importance of testing their own homes for radon.

Now that your Radon Tee is on its way, you should begin planning for your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event. I hope you’re ready because there’s a lot to do over the next couple of weeks. The enclosed guide will help you create a successful Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event that not only attracts local area residents, but also media coverage.

The enclosed guide will help you and your team invite local celebrities to your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event, learn media outreach tips, provide you with a sample press release template, as well as facts, myths, and resources about radon. The guide should help your team create a successful event and generate media coverage.

Afterward, don’t forget to share the success of your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event by uploading photos, videos, and other materials to www.facebook.com/radontee, www.twitter.com/radontee, and www.radonleaders.org/radontee/share. Sharing your story will help inspire others to conduct successful Radon Tee outreach themselves.

Thanks again and we’re looking forward to the success of your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event!

Sincerely,

Gloria Linnertz
Radon Tee Team Champion

encl: Radon Tee World Trek 2010 Event Planning Guide.doc

Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 Event Planning Guide



With your Radon Tee on its way, its time to begin planning your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event. From inviting local celebrities to drafting a press release to attracting media coverage this guide is designed to help you and your team create a well-rounded Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.

Table of Contents

<u>Inviting Local Celebrities</u>	2
Make the calls and get local celebrities onboard.	2
Using celebrities at your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.	3
Follow up after your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.	3
<u>Media Outreach Tips</u>	3
Tell the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 and radon story.	3
1. Build successful relationships with the media.	4
2. Start with a good media list.	4
3. Write a press release (see page 7 for a press release template).	5
4. Write a good pitch letter.	5
5. Follow up.	5
<u>Press Release Template</u>	7
<u>Facts, Myths, and Resources</u>	8
Facts about radon.	8
Myths about radon.	9
Helpful resources on Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 and radon test kits.	9

Inviting Local Celebrities

What better way to get the community involved and attract media coverage to your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event than by inviting local celebrities and dignitaries to join the cause. Invite them to help you educate Americans about the dangers of radon exposure and encourage them to take action to protect their own homes and families from radon. Below are a few tips on how to recruit and who to invite.

Get local celebrities excited about telling the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 and radon story.

Raising radon awareness is something we can all support since every 1 in 15 homes across the country has a radon problem. Inviting local celebrities to your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event and getting them excited about raising radon awareness will attract local area residents and media coverage. When reaching out to local celebrities, use the following tips:

- Provide background information on the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 project and the Radon Tee, a special t-shirt designed for [Cancer Survivors Against Radon \(CanSAR\)](#) by a group of eighth grade students from Illinois.
- Provide background information on radon. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, second only to smoking, and radon exposure is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers.
- Don't forget to share the dates and times of your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.
- Remind local celebrities they would be joining a social media movement and provide them links to both Facebook™ and Twitter™ accounts (www.facebook.com/radontee and www.twitter.com/radontee, respectively).
- Mention the potential for media coverage not only at the event, but also after the event is over.
- Follow up! Sometimes it takes several calls, or calling up the chain, to recruit your desired local celebrity. Don't get discouraged – raising radon awareness is a cause everyone will want to join.

Make the calls and get local celebrities onboard.

Most local celebrities are just a phone call away. However, make sure you have a brief letter on hand about your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event in case you need to follow up by mail or e-mail. Below are a few recommendations for potential local celebrity invitees.

- National and state government officials (e.g. Representatives, Senators, etc)
- City or county officials (e.g. Mayors, Board Directors/Members, Police or Fire Chief, etc)
- State or county members of the Miss America Organization, Miss America Teen Organization, Miss USA Organization or Miss USA Teen Organization
- Members from nearby professional or semi-professional sports teams (e.g. baseball, football, soccer, ice hockey, etc)
- Local mascots from professional, semi-professional, or high school sports teams
- Dignitaries from area schools (e.g. Principals, coaches, well-known teachers, etc)

- Well-known doctors and respected health experts who can discuss the dangers of radon and steps to mitigate health risks. Remember, nurses and physician assistants are often most passionate about raising radon awareness among their patients.
- Invite members from other organizations, such as Habit for Humanity, local housing and urban development departments or other community housing partners.
- Local area residents that have taken preventative measures against radon in their own homes

Using celebrities at your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.

Now that you have a couple of celebrities on board, think of some creative ways to design Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event that's press-worthy. To attract media, your event should be fun and engaging as well as informational. Here are some ideas and suggestions that will not only get them involved, but potentially attract media coverage.

- Have your local celebrity test their own home for radon. Use this as a photo opportunity by capturing a quick shot of a celebrity placing the actual test in their home.
- Hold a podium event with a local celebrity. Provide that local celebrity with talking points, the Radon Tee, and a sample radon test kit.
- Host a table event in the front entrance of a government building, local hardware store, or hospital. Have the local celebrity talk with visitors and people passing by.

Follow up after your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.

Don't forget to follow up with your local celebrities post event. After all, they did take time out of their busy days to support radon awareness. Best practice is to follow up with a thank you note or e-mail and a great photo from the event. Also encourage them to share their story and experience by visiting, <http://www.radonleaders.org/radontee/share>.

Media Outreach Tips

A successful media outreach approach can increase the success of your event. Since local celebrities will be taking time out of their busy schedules to help you and your event, it's critical that you work hard to get local press coverage. The following tips will help you feel comfortable about building successful relationships with the media and garnering coverage for your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.

Tell the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 and radon story.

The best way to gain the media's attention is to provide facts about the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 project and dangers of radon to public health. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, second only to smoking, and radon exposure is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers.

- Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 is a project that harnesses the power of social media. Don't be afraid to encourage media and your event attendees to join the movement online at: www.facebook.com/radontee and www.twitter.com/radontee.
- To add a buzz around your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event, invite local celebrities out to the event to take photos with local area residents.
- Don't forget to invite local area residents who have tested their homes for radon and successfully mitigated the radon problem, or whose homes were built radon-resistant.
- Invite the media to attend your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event.

Once you have sufficiently prepped for your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event, there are a few general steps you can follow to ensure that you get the best coverage possible.

1. Build successful relationships with the media.

- Establish a list of local media, taking note of beat reporters. Beat reporters are assigned to a specific area or topic, such as community health and science. Also reach out to beat reporters who cover community events.
- Contact beat reporters and editors to introduce yourself and to establish a point of contact for information.
- Submit information to local community calendars online, in print, and through broadcast stations.
- Think of reporters as avenues for getting radon information to the public.

2. Start with a good media list.

A good list is one that is relevant. In choosing whom to approach, it is important to consider who is likely to want to tell your Radon Tee story, as well as whom you would like to do it. You may want to include small newspapers and community newsletters in addition to major newspapers and television and radio stations. While you want to cast a broad net, you do not want to waste time and resources with media outlets or reporters who are not right for the event.

In most cases, it is appropriate to contact the assignment desk or assignment editor at major newspapers and television and radio stations. The assignment editor will usually give you the name and contact information for the beat reporter who covers topics related to radon. In radio, you should contact the news director.

Your local library may have a media guide listing names and addresses of the people you may want to contact. You can usually get this information from the Web site of the radio station as well. Be sure to have your contact's e-mail address. Reporters prefer to get releases and other background materials by e-mail rather than hard copy.

A good list is an accurate list. Once you have developed a list of potential contacts to target, double check that list for accuracy by calling the publication or station. Call the main number to make sure the person you have selected to contact is still in that position, and that the contact information you have is accurate.

3. Write a press release (see page 7 for a press release template).

A well-written press release can yield more media coverage than any amount of advertising could bring to radon. After securing local celebrities, craft and send a press release to announce your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event. Use the press release template provided as a guide and follow these steps to take to ensure you get the coverage you deserve.

- Keep your press release concise. Reporters and editors don't have time to read through lots of text. Your press release should be no longer than one page and should focus on the facts and the call to action for your community.
- Grab their attention. At the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead, you should have the words "For Immediate Release" in bold, capital letters.
- Make it easy for them to learn more. Somewhere near the top of the page, list your contact information including your name, title, telephone numbers, fax number, and e-mail address.
- Include a dateline or the city and state from which the press release is issued.
- Craft a lead paragraph. The first paragraph should grab the reader's attention and contain relevant information, such as the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why).

4. Write a good pitch letter.

After you have a targeted list of reporters and editors, you'll need to write a pitch letter. The pitch letter alerts editors and reporters to your story and tells them why they should cover your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event. Remember, when writing keep the pitch letter short and compelling by covering the "Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How" of the event immediately. A pitch letter is commonly sent in an e-mail along with the press release. Journalists, oftentimes, do not like to receive attachments, so make sure you paste both the pitch and press release in the body of the e-mail. Follow up with a timely phone call and remind the journalist about the photo-ops with local celebrities.

5. Follow up.

You've sent your materials out to the reporters and editors on your list and allowed time for them to look over the information. Now it's time to make follow-up calls. During your follow-up calls, you should:

Be prepared. Make notes for your calls and be prepared to take notes during the calls. Plan what you are going to say ahead of time and stick to it. The Radon Tee is trekking around the world to raise awareness about how radon is a serious health risk that is easy to overlook because it is an odorless, invisible, and tasteless killer. Also remember to send the message that radon testing and mitigation is convenient and cost-effective.

Be polite and brief. Editors and reporters are usually on a very tight schedule and they will appreciate it if you get right to the point. Identify yourself, tell them why you are calling, and offer to answer any questions they may have.

Ask for coverage. After you have confirmed receipt of your letter and answered any questions, ask for coverage of your event.

Other helpful tips.

Timing is everything. Consider the editor's schedule when you place your calls. Newspapers are usually working on a mid-afternoon deadline for the next day, so late afternoon is the best time to call. Call the staff of noon news programs after 3:00 p.m. and call the evening news in the morning.

More than one call may be required. This is especially true with television stations. Often the assignments for a given day are not made until that morning. The station's ability to send a crew to your event can be affected by other events taking place that day. If a media outlet has expressed interest in covering your event but has not committed to it, call on the day of the event and ask again for their coverage and remind them of the details.

Don't get discouraged. You are competing against other story ideas and current events. You might feel as though you are getting the run-around. It's possible that one person will tell you to speak to another or to call back at another time. If so, follow their directions. It is also possible that people will be short with you because they are busy. The best strategy is to be courteous, helpful, creative, and most of all, persistent. Remember that the media needs news to fill their programs and newspapers. Let them know why your story is worthy and make it as easy as you can for them to cover your issue and events.

Reporters may not attend your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event. If a reporter tells you in advance that he or she will not be able to make it to your press conference, send them a press release and photo post-event anyway and encourage them to use the information to build a story with their own sources. The best way to establish good relationships with the media is to offer them opportunities for interesting and newsworthy stories.

Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[Date]

Contact: [Your Name, Phone, E-mail]

Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 Travels to [City, State] to Raise Radon Awareness

Photo Opportunity – Local Celebrities Join the Cause at [Event/Location] on [Date]

([City, State]—[Date]) The Radon Tee, hosted by [Community/Organization], makes another stop in [City, State] as part of the Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 on [date]. The project harnesses the power of social media channels such as Facebook™ and Twitter™ to educate Americans about the dangers of radon exposure and to encourage them to take action to protect their homes and families.

The event will officially kick off [date], [time] at [location]. After a quick educational discussion about radon—including where you can find radon test kits locally—[insert celebrities names] will pose with local area residents and the Radon Tee. Photos and videos of the event will be posted on www.facebook.com/radontee and www.twitter.com/radontee.

“The simple fact is: Each day, radon-induced lung cancer claims more than 57 lives in the United States and this year alone, more than 21,000 people will fall victim to this deadly disease,” said Gloria Linnertz, Radon Tee Team Champion. “By sponsoring the Radon Tee, [Community/ Organization] is raising awareness and encouraging their community to take action and preventative measures by taking the first step and testing their home’s radon levels.”

Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive. Radon test kits can be purchased at local hardware and home improvement stores or directly from radon testing companies. You can also contact your state radon program to order a test kit or visit www.sosradon.org for test kit coupons. Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to that of many common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed.

About Radon Tee: World Trek 2010

Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 is a project that harnesses the power of social media by posting photos and videos of ordinary people appearing with the Radon Tee, a special t-shirt designed for [Cancer Survivors Against Radon \(CanSAR\)](#) by a group of eighth grade students from Illinois. As Radon Tee treks around the world, social content will be posted to its Facebook and Twitter accounts, where fans can see others who support radon awareness and learn about the importance of testing their own homes for radon. To learn more about this initiative, visit: www.radonleaders.org/radontee.

About [Radon Tee Fan Organization, if applicable]

(Organization to add paragraph, if applicable)

###

Facts, Myths, and Resources

Throughout your Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 event you may get asked some hard questions about radon. From stages of pitching to your actual event, it's important to make sure that all persons involved—including local celebrities—understand the basic facts about radon. Use the following facts, myths, and resources section as a guide to answering those tough questions. Also feel free to tailor with more localized information about your area.

Facts about radon.

Radon is a cancer-causing, radioactive gas. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas released in rock, soil, and water from the natural decay of uranium. While levels in outdoor air pose a relatively low threat to human health, radon can accumulate to dangerous levels inside buildings. You can't see, smell or taste it, but an elevated radon level in your home may be affecting the health of your family.

Exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the number one cause among non-smokers. Globally, exposure to radon in the home and workplace is one of the main risks of ionizing radiation causing tens of thousands of deaths from lung cancer each year.

You should test for radon. Testing your house for radon is easy to do. If your house has a radon problem, you can take steps to fix it to protect yourself and your family. Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L), a measurement of radioactivity. EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that homes with radon levels at 4pCi/L or higher should be fixed. Also consider fixing homes with radon levels between 2pCi/L and 4pCi/L.

You can find out if your home has an elevated radon level by conducting a simple test. It's as easy as opening a package, placing a radon detector in a designated area, and, after a set number of days, sending the detector back to a lab for analysis. The lab will the inform you of your radon test results. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas.

You can fix a radon problem. The cost of making repairs to reduce the radon level depends on several factors, including how your home was built. Most homes can be fixed for about the same cost as other common home repairs, like painting or having a new hot water heater installed. Look in your local phone book or call your state radon office to locate radon mitigators in your area if you find an elevated radon level in your home.

New homes can be built with radon-resistant features. Radon-resistant construction methods can be effective in reducing radon entry. When used properly, these simple and cost-effective techniques can help reduce the accumulation of radon gas in homes.

Every new home should be tested after occupancy, even if it was built using radon-resistant construction methods. If radon levels above EPA's of 4pCi/L or above are detected, it is easier and

less expensive to reduce radon levels in homes that have been built with radon-resistant construction techniques.

Myths about radon.

“Radon affects only certain kinds of homes or I don’t have a basement, so I probably don’t have a radon problem.” Radon can seep in from soil anywhere around or under a home, regardless of whether your home has a basement, a crawl space, or is built slab-on-grade. The style of home or whether you have a basement has very little to do with radon entry. All structures have negative pressures in the lower half of the building no matter how they are built or designed. While house construction can affect radon levels, radon can be a problem in homes of all types: old homes, new homes, drafty homes, insulated homes, homes with basements, and homes without basements. Local geology, construction materials, and how the home was built are also factors that can affect radon levels in homes. The EPA and the Surgeon General recommend radon testing for all types of homes. In multi-level homes, testing should be done on a level below the third floor.

“I don’t live in an area designated as a high radon zone, so my home won’t have a problem.” The EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey conducted surveys of radon potential across the United States. They broke the country down into three zones according to their potential for high indoor radon levels, with Zone 1 having the highest radon potential. It is true that homes in Zones 1 and 2 have a statistically higher chance of having elevated levels of radon. However, the fact is that elevated levels of radon have been found in homes *in all fifty states*. The radon level in your home depends on geology under and near your home. The only way to know for sure, and to protect your family from radon, is to test your home.

“Two of my neighbors have tested their homes for radon and they don’t have high levels, so I probably don’t either.” Radon levels can vary considerably from house to house, even on the same street. It is nearly impossible to predict the exact nature of geologic soil deposits and the extent to which soil gasses will seep into and be retained by a specific house. The only way to know whether radon exists in elevated levels in your home, and to protect your family from radon, is to test.

“I already have a radon monitor in my home and it says I’m safe.” Some people mistakenly think carbon monoxide monitors or smoke detectors measure radon – every home should have both but they cannot detect radon.

“I’ve lived in my home for a long time, it doesn’t make sense to take action now.” You will reduce your risk of lung cancer when you reduce radon levels, even if you’ve lived with a radon problem for a long time.

Helpful resources on Radon Tee: World Trek 2010 and radon test kits.

Information on Radon Tee: World Trek 2010

- Web site: www.radonleaders.org/radontee
- Informational Webinar: www.radonleaders.org/resources/RadonTeeWebinar

Follow the Radon Tee's Travels through Social Media

- *Facebook:*
www.facebook.com/radontee
- *Twitter:*
www.twitter.com/radontee

Information on Radon Test Kits

Radon test kits are available at your local home improvement or hardware store, or in some cases from your state radon office. Below are some helpful resources on how to obtain an easy-to-use radon test kit:

- Make a \$25.00 minimum donation to CanSAR and receive a free radon test kit and Radon Tee World Trek: 2010 commemorative t-shirt. www.cansar.org/donate-to-cansar
- Purchase a test kit from your local home improvement or hardware store. Many kits are priced under \$25.00.
- Visit www.sosradon.org or call 1-800-SOS-RADON to learn more information on testing your home.
- Contact your state radon program, details available at www.epa.gov/iaq/whereyoulive.html, for more information about obtaining test kits from your state or from a radon testing company or laboratory in your area.