



Northwest Pediatrics
& Adolescent Medicine

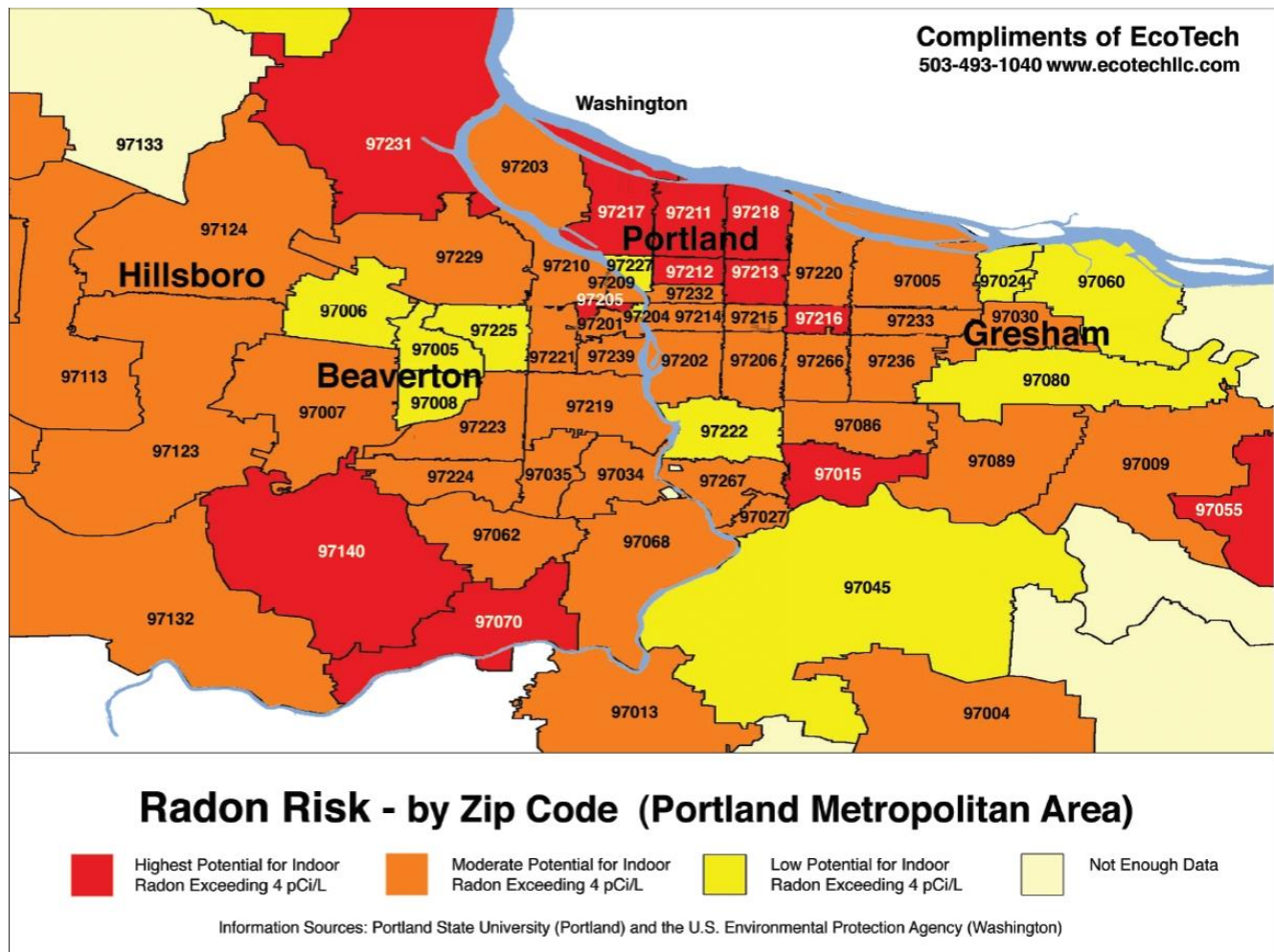
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3/5/15

RE: Support for HB 2931

Esteemed Members of the Oregon House,

I write today as a board certified Oregon licensed Pediatrician with a Masters in Environmental Health. My practice is in Hood River, and part time in Northwest Portland. We know thanks to colleagues at Portland State University and the US EPA that several areas around the Portland Metro area (see map) are at increased risk for radon exposure.



As you know, radon increases lifetime risk of lung cancer (even among non-smokers) due to its natural radiation. The radon particles attach to dust particles, leading to increased exposures for children school aged and younger. Once attached to the dust on the ground where kids sit and play, that radon is 2-3 orders of magnitude more carcinogenic than when free floating in air. The smaller the dust particle, the deeper into the lungs it can travel and deposit into lung tissue. (ATSDR, 2009)



While it can occur naturally in water and soil, almost all risk from radon is through inhalation, which directly affects the developing lung tissue of children. This is why the US EPA recommends testing in schools. This is a national recommendation, made even more important by known local exposures (see map). ANY inhalation of radon increases risk of future cancer, there is NO safe level of exposure for this 2nd leading cause of lung cancer.

This is particularly striking for me at this particular moment, when my mother, a former school teacher and non-smoker, has been recently diagnosed with an advanced lung cancer.

The second largest exposure for kids is through water. Because kids drink more water and breathe more air for their size relative to adults, it is critical to assure prevention. Our teachers, staff, and school administrators who are in our school buildings over many years also deserve protection.

Oregon's children deserve the cost effective public health measure that HB 2931 provides. Please contact me for any additional info or questions.

Sources: US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and US EPA.

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