

Testimony in Support of HB 2931
Hearing: March 6, 2015
House Committee on Health Care
by Richard Steinbrugge, P.E.
Executive Administrator for Facilities
Beaverton School District

The Beaverton School District endorses a radon testing program for schools. Managing radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas, is a very important component to understanding and providing the best indoor air quality to our students and staff. BSD feels strongly that a radon program will not only help us understand and mitigate radon dangers in our schools but will also help increase awareness to all school occupants to remind them to have their homes tested as well.

Radon is not a new hazard and we think most everyone would agree that radon testing is a good thing and it is desired. However, our district like most all others, have real financial limitations that we believe legislation should be sensitive to. Given the varying nature of each district's limitations, any new bill should provide for not only radon support and expertise to those who need it, but also testing program flexibility, and funding to help offset costs. Providing radon expertise, program support, and financial assistance to those districts that need it and the flexibility deciding where to sample and when re-sample is paramount.

BSD would like to share our experience. Our district has conducted representative radon sampling in the past and but we have not kept pace with sampling of new facilities or expanded facilities and the resampling of old buildings. Recognizing this, BSD solicited the expertise of a qualified radon consultant to provide training to key District personnel and help us develop a comprehensive district-wide radon sampling program that incorporates a targeted and prioritized sampling approach. Instead of sampling every occupied slab-on-grade and basement level room that would take years to complete, BSD developed a focused program aimed at a targeting and prioritizing radon sampling to collect statistically reliable radon data in highest risk areas of each of our facilities. This targeted approach will be phased in four prioritized tasks that is an effective way to get good radon data quickly at a significant time and cost savings.

BSD's four prioritized objectives include:

- Task 1 - Targeted sampling of an new and expanded facilities.
- Task 2 - Resample areas with prior results over 4 pico curies per liter (pCi/L) and resample a percentage of areas with any result less than 4 pCi/L.
- Task 3 - resample all new radon concentration results over 4 pCi/L.
- Task 4 - sample remaining facilities previously sampled with no measurable radon levels. This would also include resampling of facilities that undergo significant renovation or system upgrade that may alter ventilation patterns.

An integral part of the radon program is the training. The radon consultant will be responsible for developing a training program and conduct initial training to key BSD personnel who will then assist in sampling Tasks 2-4 above. The ultimate goal of the training program is to 'train the trainer' so that BSD can conduct radon training internally so that future phases of radon sampling may be conducted internally.

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Additionally, BSD is taking advantage of the radon consultant's expertise by developing strategic site-specific targeted sampling plans based on known data gaps and unique site conditions so that radon concentrations will be known in identified higher risk areas of each of our district facilities. To accomplish this BSD's radon program calls for a focus on identifying the highest potential for radon at each site which includes:

- evaluating all frequently occupied rooms in contact with the soil.
- evaluating the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system (HVAC) serving those areas;
- identifying any poorly ventilated areas through carbon dioxide measurements;
- identifying any negative pressurized spaces; and
- identifying areas of obvious damage or cracking of the foundation (or slab) that would facilitate radon intrusion;

BSD projects that we will complete all four of these tasks in less than one year beginning October 2015. At the end of this period, the District will be in a good position to re-evaluate our radon program and sample strategy as well as integrate any new radon bill requirements.

Thank you for your time in considering this important issue in our schools.



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