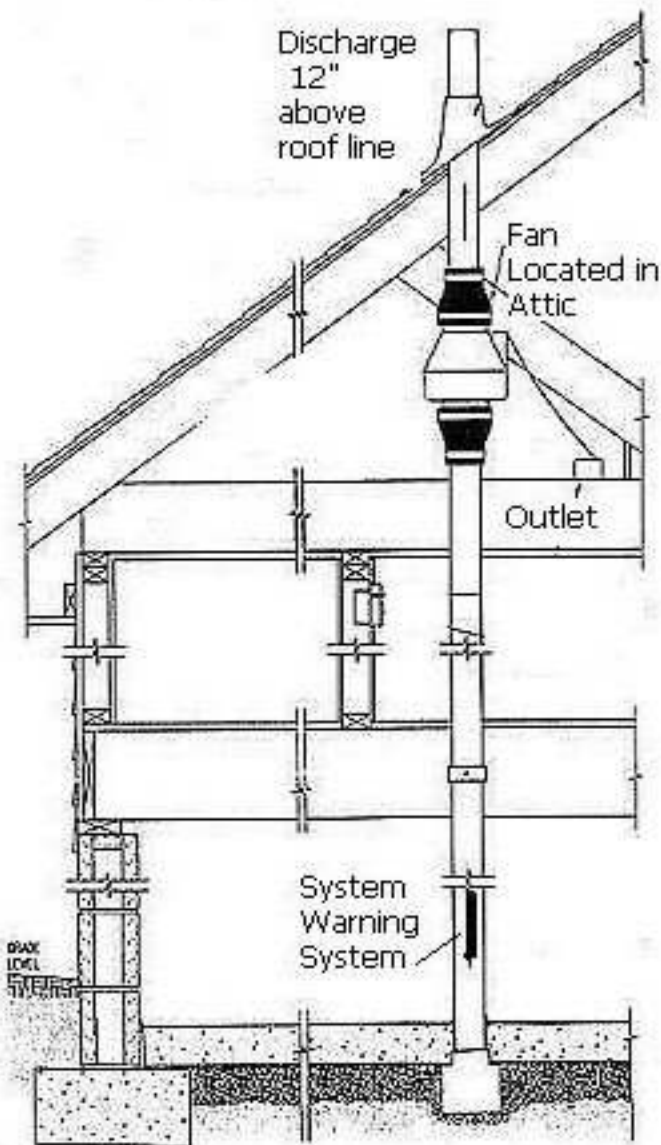


Q & A

Buying A Home With A Radon Mitigation System?

We are buying a home with a radon mitigation system installed. How do we tell if the system is working, and what should we do to maintain it?

It is a great idea to know what you are buying and how to take care of the system. The following is information from the EPA.



EPA states it is a good idea to retest the home for radon at least every two years to be sure radon levels remain low. Check with the seller to see if they have a current test report (within 2 years). If not, have the home tested again.

Maintaining Your Radon Reduction System

Similar to a furnace or chimney, radon reduction systems need occasional maintenance. If you have a fan powered (or active) system, you should look at your warning device, usually a manometer, on a regular basis to make sure the system is working correctly. Fans may last for five years or more. Most manufacturer warranties tend not to exceed five years, and the fans may need to be repaired or replaced.



Replacing a fan will cost around \$200 to \$350, including parts and labor.

Installation Check List:

- Radon reduction systems must be clearly labeled. This will avoid accidental changes to the system that could disrupt its function.
- The exhaust pipes of soil suction systems must vent above the surface of the roof and 10 feet or more above the ground. If the exhaust pipes do not vent at least 2 feet above openings they must be at least 10 feet away from windows, doors, or other openings that could allow the radon to reenter the home.
- The exhaust fan must not be located in or below a livable area. For instance, it should be installed in an unconditioned space.
- If installing an exhaust fan outside, the contractor must install a fan that meets local building codes for exterior use.
- Electrical connections of all active radon reduction systems must be installed according to local electrical codes.
- A warning device must be installed to alert you if an active system stops working properly. Examples of system failure warning devices are: a liquid gauge, a sound alarm, a light indicator, and a dial, or needle display, gauge. The warning device must be placed where it can be seen or heard easily. Your contractor should check that the warning device works. Later on, if your monitor shows that the system is not working properly, call a contractor to have it checked.
- Make sure the seller completely explains the radon

reduction system, demonstrates how it operates and explains how to maintain it. Ask for written operating and maintenance instructions and copies of any warranties.

Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV)

These are only used when the solution to a high radon level has to be dilution. An HRV can be installed to increase



ventilation which will help reduce the radon levels in your home. An HRV will increase ventilation by introducing outdoor air while using the heated or cooled air being exhausted to warm or cool the incoming air. HRVs can be designed to ventilate all or part of your home, although they are more effective in reducing radon levels when used to ventilate only the basement. If properly balanced and maintained, they ensure a constant degree of ventilation throughout the year. HRVs also can improve air quality in houses that have other indoor pollutants. There could be a **significant** increase in the heating and cooling costs with an

RV, but not as great as ventilation without heat recovery. The filter in an HRV requires periodic cleaning and should be changed twice a year. Replacement filters for an HRV are easily changed and are priced between \$10 and \$25. Ask your contractor where filters can be purchased. Also, the vent that brings fresh air in from the outside needs to be inspected for leaves and debris. The ventilator should be checked annually by a heating, ventilating, and air conditioning professional to make sure the air flow remains properly balanced. HRVs used for radon control should run all the time.

Source: <http://www.epa.gov/radon>

Thought For The Month

"WHAT WE HAVE ONCE ENJOYED, WE CAN NEVER LOSE. ALL THAT WE LOVE DEEPLY BECOMES A PART OF US."

HELEN KELLER

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