

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 9

FINAL READING

Introduced by Krist, 10.

Read first time January 05, 2017

Committee: Urban Affairs

- 1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to radon; to adopt the Radon Resistant New
- 2 Construction Act; and to create a task force.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Sections 1 to 5 of this act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the Radon Resistant New Construction Act.

3 Sec. 2. The Legislature finds that:

4 (1) Radon is a radioactive element that is part of the radioactive
5 decay chain of naturally occurring uranium in soil;

6 (2) Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers and
7 is the number one risk in homes according to the Harvard Center for Risk
8 Analysis at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health;

9 (3) The World Health Organization Handbook on Indoor Radon includes
10 key messages which state:

11 (a) "There is no known threshold concentration below which radon
12 exposure presents no risk."; and

13 (b) "The majority of radon-induced lung cancers are caused by low
14 and moderate radon concentrations rather than by high radon
15 concentrations, because in general less people are exposed to high indoor
16 radon concentrations.";

17 (4) The Surgeon General of the United States urged Americans to test
18 their homes to find out how much radon they might be breathing;

19 (5) The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates that
20 more than twenty thousand Americans die of radon-related lung cancer each
21 year; and

22 (6) The United States Environmental Protection Agency has identified
23 radon levels in Nebraska as the third highest in the United States
24 because of the high concentration of uranium in the soil.

25 Sec. 3. For purposes of the Radon Resistant New Construction Act:

26 (1) Active radon mitigation system means a family of radon
27 mitigation systems involving mechanically driven soil depressurization,
28 including subslab depressurization, drain tile depressurization, block
29 wall depressurization, and submembrane depressurization. Active radon
30 mitigation system is also known as active soil depressurization;

31 (2) Building code means an ordinance, resolution, or law that

1 establishes standards applicable to new construction;

2 (3) Building contractor means any individual, corporation,
3 partnership, limited liability company, or other business entity that
4 engages in new construction;

5 (4) Department means the Department of Health and Human Services;

6 (5) New construction means any original construction of a single-
7 family home or a multifamily dwelling, including apartments, group homes,
8 condominiums, and townhouses, or any original construction of a building
9 used for commercial, industrial, educational, or medical purposes. New
10 construction does not include additions to existing structures or
11 remodeling of existing structures;

12 (6) Passive new construction pipe means a pipe installed in new
13 construction that relies solely on the convective flow of air upward for
14 soil gas depressurization and may consist of multiple pipes routed
15 through conditioned space from below the foundation to above the roof;
16 and

17 (7) Radon mitigation specialist means an individual who is licensed
18 by the department as a radon mitigation specialist in accordance with the
19 Radiation Control Act.

20 Sec. 4. (1) The Radon Resistant New Construction Task Force is
21 created. The task force shall consist of the chief medical officer of the
22 Division of Public Health of the Department of Health and Human Services
23 as designated in section 81-3115 or his or her designee, who shall serve
24 as the chairperson of the task force, and the following additional
25 members to be appointed by the Governor:

26 (a) Three representatives of home builders' associations in
27 Nebraska, each from a different congressional district;

28 (b) A representative of a home inspectors' association in Nebraska;

29 (c) Two representatives of commercial construction associations, one
30 of whom must have experience related to large-scale projects and one of
31 whom must have experience related to medium-scale to small-scale

1 projects;

2 (d) A representative of a Nebraska realtors' organization;

3 (e) A representative of a respiratory disease organization;

4 (f) A representative of a cancer research and prevention

5 organization;

6 (g) A representative of the League of Nebraska Municipalities;

7 (h) Three community public health representatives, each from a

8 different congressional district;

9 (i) A professional engineer as defined in section 81-3422;

10 (j) An architect as defined in section 81-3404; and

11 (k) A representative with expertise in residential or commercial

12 building codes.

13 (2) The task force shall meet at the call of the chairperson. The

14 appointed members of the task force shall serve without compensation but

15 shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses as provided

16 in sections 81-1174 to 81-1177. The department shall provide staff and

17 support for the operation of the task force.

18 (3) The task force shall develop minimum standards for radon

19 resistant new construction and shall recommend such minimum standards to

20 the Governor, to the Health and Human Services Committee of the

21 Legislature, and to the Urban Affairs Committee of the Legislature. In

22 developing such minimum standards, the task force shall:

23 (a) Design the minimum standards so that they may be enforced by a

24 county, city, or village as part of its local building code;

25 (b) Consider Appendix F of the International Residential Code for

26 One- and Two-Family Dwellings, 2012 edition, published by the

27 International Code Council; and

28 (c) Consider including the following provisions in such minimum

29 standards:

30 (i) A requirement that the installation of an active radon

31 mitigation system only be performed by a building contractor or his or

1 her subcontractors or by a radon mitigation specialist;

2 (ii) A requirement that the installation of radon resistant new
3 construction only be performed by a building contractor or his or her
4 subcontractors or by a radon mitigation specialist; and

5 (iii) A requirement that only a building contractor or his or her
6 subcontractors or a radon mitigation specialist be allowed to install a
7 radon vent fan or upgrade a passive new construction pipe to an active
8 radon mitigation system.

9 (4) The task force shall provide its recommendations by April 15,
10 2018. The task force and this section terminate on May 1, 2018.

11 Sec. 5. It is the intent of the Legislature that the
12 recommendations provided by the Radon Resistant New Construction Task
13 Force under section 4 of this act be used by the Legislature during the
14 2019 legislative session to establish, in statute, minimum standards for
15 radon resistant new construction.