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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bergen County Executive Donovan Encourages Residents To Test Their Home For Radon Exposure

BERGEN COUNTY, NJ—Bergen County Executive Kathleen A. Donovan, the Department of Health Services (BCDHS), and the Bergen County Cancer Coalition announce that January is National Radon Action Month. To promote radon testing in Bergen County, a limited supply of free radon test kits are available on a first come, first serve basis to county residents.

“Radon is a serious health risk,” said Donovan. “Exposure to radon has been identified as the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers resulting in approximately 500 deaths per year in New Jersey and approximately 21,000 deaths per year in the United States.” Donovan also states, “I encourage all residents to test their homes for radon. Radon is invisible and odorless and you may be unaware of your exposure to this dangerous gas.”

Radon is a radioactive gas that occurs naturally when uranium and radium break down in the soil and in rock formations. Radon gas moves up through the soil and finds its way into homes through cracks in the foundation and openings around pumps, pipes and drains. Radon can build to unhealthy levels if trapped indoors, especially during colder months when windows and doors are kept closed.

The U.S. Surgeon General and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommend all homes be tested for radon levels to protect the health of homeowners and their families. Testing procedures are simple. Short term tests are typically conducted over a two to seven day period. If the test indicates a radon problem, radon mitigation systems can be installed at a cost similar to that of other home repairs.

To receive a free test kit, available on a first come, first serve basis, residents should contact the BCDHS Environmental Program at 201-634-2803 or can pick one up by visiting Room 103A, 327 E. Ridgewood Avenue, Paramus, NJ. Kits will also be available at county health services for \$20 after the supply of free kits has been distributed. Some home improvement or hardware stores sell test kits as well.

For more information on radon, visit www.njradon.org. For information about tobacco use that increases the risk of lung cancer especially in homes that have elevated radon levels, call the Bergen County Cancer Coalition Coordinator at 201-634-2707.

The Bergen County Cancer Coalition is made possible through a grant from the New Jersey Department of Health & Senior Services' Office of Cancer Control and Prevention. For more information on Comprehensive Cancer Control in New Jersey, please visit: www.njcancer.gov.

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