DIVISION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

MCPS Radon Management Program

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can accumulate in indoor environments. Radon is a byproduct of the decay of the naturally occurring radioactive gas uranium. Radon can enter buildings through cracks and gaps in the foundation, especially around water supply lines, gas pipes, and basement sump pumps.

Radon can cause lung cancer and other health problems. Radon is considered the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Radon is also a major contributor to the total radiation exposure of the American population.

The EPA published a Radon Measurement in Schools (Revised Edition) in 2016. This publication provides guidance on how to measure radon in schools.

According to the EPA, radon levels in schools can range from very low to very high. Radon levels in schools can be affected by several factors, including the construction of the building, the presence of cracks and gaps in the foundation, and the location of the school.

Radon levels in schools can be measured using passive or active sampling methods. Passive sampling methods include the use of radon detectors that are placed in the building for a specific period of time. Active sampling methods involve using fans to draw air through a radon collection device.

The EPA recommends that schools with radon levels above 4 pCi/L be remediated. Remediation methods can include sealing cracks and gaps in the foundation, adding radon mitigation systems, and reducing the amount of radon in the building.

It is important for school districts to monitor radon levels in their schools and implement remediation strategies if necessary to protect the health of students and staff.

MCPS recognizes the importance of monitoring and addressing radon levels in schools to ensure the safety and well-being of its students, staff, and community.