

Getting the work done

Who should carry out the work?

You will need to decide which is best for you – doing the work yourself, using a local builder or seeking assistance from a specialist radon contractor? There are advantages and disadvantages of each.

Doing-It-Yourself

Most radon solutions involve simple construction techniques which can be carried out by anyone competent in 'Do It Yourself' work. What usually puts householders off doing their own work is knowing what materials are needed and where they can be obtained. In fact most of the materials to be used are available locally in DIY stores or builders merchants.

There is a wealth of advice and guidance available to assist householders in carrying out DIY works. By carrying out the work yourself the cost of the work can be reduced considerably, so that even the more expensive solutions such as an internal mini-sump system need cost no more than say £300-£400.

Local Building Contractor

If you cannot do the work yourself or are unsure about what needs to be done you could consider using a local builder. The main advantage of using a local builder is that they will be familiar with the construction techniques used in your area. In fact if you have a regular builder who knows your house it is worth contacting them for advice. Another point is that in areas affected by radon many local builders have attended radon seminars and training sessions so are aware of the solutions that are available.

One disadvantage of using a local builder is that they may not have carried out that many projects. So if the property to be solved is complex in layout and the construction unusual they may not be able to recommend the most appropriate solution. Also because they do not specialise in radon most builders will only guarantee the workmanship and materials, and not the effectiveness of the solution in reducing the radon level.

Specialist Contractor

The main advantage of using specialist contractors is that they will have experience in dealing with radon in a wider range of situations. Some specialise in particular types of solution and can ensure that the systems they install are fine tuned to work effectively in terms of both radon reduction and running costs. Many specialist contractors offer a guarantee for both the workmanship and materials, as well as the effectiveness of the solution in reducing the radon level.

Another advantage of using a specialist contractor is that they can usually carry out a more detailed survey of the house than the householder or a local builder. This can assist in ensuring that the most appropriate solution is applied. It should be noted however that contractors are likely to charge for this service. This is to protect the contractor from giving technical advice free of charge only to find that the building owner then carries out remedial work on a DIY basis.

radon solutions



The only real disadvantage of using a specialist contractor is that they can prove to be more expensive, this reflects the level of service offered, and, in some cases where they are national contractors, the cost of travelling from outside the district.

How to find a contractor

As with any building works there are many contractors from which to choose. It is advisable to seek technical solutions and cost estimates from more than one contractor, usually three quotations will be sufficient to assess the technical and cost options offered to you.

You will find details of building contractors in local business telephone directories, however listings are unlikely to indicate whether companies carry out radon works. Many local authority environmental health officers maintain lists of local and specialist radon contractors. Details of specialist contractors can be obtained by contacting the Radon Council (see below).

The Radon Council Limited

The Radon Council is an Independent Regulatory Body for the radon industry. One of the aims of the Council is to raise standards in the radon industry.

With this in mind contractors must follow an agreed Code of Practice. The Radon Council maintains a list of contractors, suppliers and consultants offering advice and services involving remedial works for radon gas, many of whom can supply fans. Details can be obtained from:

**The Radon Council Limited,
PO Box 39, Shepperton,
Middlesex TW17 8AD**

Tel: 01932 221212

Fax: 01932 229779

Trade associations may also be able to help – details of these can be often be found in main libraries.

Further information

BRE has prepared a range of guides describing the technical solutions for radon. These may be obtained from BRE Bookshop, BRE Garston, Watford, WD25 9XX, telephone 01923 664262, e-mail bookshop@bre.co.uk, or visit www.BREbookshop.com

- **for further practical advice about work to reduce radon levels**
- **for a list of companies known to supply suitable fans**

Contact BRE Radon Hotline 01923 664707 www.bre.co.uk/radon

Disclaimer

It should be noted that BRE cannot guarantee that the measures described on this sheet will reduce the radon level in your home, however similar measures have regularly proven successful elsewhere in the UK.

Prepared for The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Prepared by Building Research Establishment Ltd © Building Research Establishment Ltd 2003.

Printed on recycled paper containing 80% post consumer waste and 20% Totally Chlorine Free virgin pulp.

Other useful contacts

Defra 020 7082 8498
www.defra.gov.uk/environment/radioactivity/radon

NRPB 0800 614529 www.nrpb.org/radon

The Radon Council 01932 221212 www.radonhotline.org

PB8518o

