

INVESTIGATION 10**WHAT ARE THE ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF RADON?****INTRODUCTION**

An environmental topic, such as radon, constitutes an important issue for health workers, radiation scientists, and geologists. But radon also extends into many other areas of everyday life in ways that can be complex and far reaching. For example, radon found in homes has received so much negative publicity that people may overlook the real health hazard that radon is and worry instead about the financial consequences of having a home with elevated radon levels. They may be concerned about property values, about costs for remediation, and how to convince a potential buyer that the house is safe. What is the legal and ethical responsibility of the owner of a rental property if he or she knows that it contains high radon? What are the responsibilities of the realtors involved in a sales transaction? Does a seller have a responsibility to inform potential buyers of radon levels in the home? Should the results of radon measurement tests be confidential? Even though the EPA "action level" of 4 pCi/L reduces risk of lung cancer, who decides "How Safe Is Safe?"

OBJECTIVE

To explore the legal and ethical issues of radon contamination and to construct statewide legislation to deal with these issues.

PROCEDURE

1. Your class has been assigned a job by the New Jersey State Legislature. Your job is to design new legislation to govern the rights and responsibilities of all people involved in real estate sales and rentals in New Jersey. The topic to be covered concerns real estate property with high radon concentrations in indoor air. You want to protect the rights of buyers and sellers, landlords and tenants, real estate agents and rental managers, newborn babies and invalids confined to their homes. Be sure that your new set of laws promotes fairness and adequately protects human rights and human health. Be careful, however, not to add unnecessary legal burdens on the citizens of New Jersey.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

2. Describe in detail your proposed legislation (use additional sheets of paper, as necessary).
