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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Picente Urges Home Radon Testing

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente, Jr. and the Oneida County Health Department are urging all residents to learn more about the dangers of radon gas and to test their homes for this known carcinogen during January, *National Radon Action Month*.

Oneida County has been identified as a 'moderate risk' county for radon, a colorless, odorless gas that results from the natural decay of soil and rocks. Radon can seep into both old and new homes through cracks in the house's foundation, construction joints, gaps around pipes and well water supplies. Figures from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) indicate that more than 1700 homes have been tested in Oneida County with some showing radon levels as high as 92.2 picocuries per liter (pCi/L). The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends fixing a home that has radon levels above 4 pCi/L.

"Long-term exposure to radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in this country," Picente said. Picente added, ***"All Oneida County residents should test their homes for radon and take the necessary steps to eliminate this health threat when elevated levels are found."***

According to the Oneida County Health Department, those using tobacco products greatly increase their risks from radon.

"The Surgeon General finds that smokers are three times more likely to develop lung cancer when exposed to radon," Daniel Gilmore, Director of Environmental Health and Supervisor in Charge of the Health Department said.

Testing is the only way to determine if dangerous levels of radon are present in your home. Home Radon Test kits are available at most hardware stores for less than \$10.00. You can also obtain a kit by calling 1-800-458-1158.

Most homes can be mitigated by installing a fairly inexpensive ventilation system ranging in cost from \$800 to \$1500.

For more information on radon log onto our web site at ocgov.net or visit the following sites:

- www.nyradon.org
- www.epa.gov/radon/