The Little Lungs Project
Testing for Radon in Saskatchewan Homes
Introduction

• Take Action on Radon
• Testing Rates
• The Little Lungs Project
• Project Goals
• Wins and Losses
• Future Direction
Take Action on Radon (TAOR)

- Canadian Coalition
  - Lung Association; Scout Environmental; Health Canada
  - Increase Radon outreach and education

- Provincial Networks across Canada
  - TAOR Saskatchewan
Testing Rates

- All over the map
- While some States have high testing rates, some are quite low (1%)
- Due to various initiatives specific cities/areas may have high testing rates
- A 2014 stat implied a 4% testing rate in Canada
The Little Lungs Program
Brain child of Keith Hanson at Sun Ridge

A way to

• Increase testing rates
• Build awareness
• Target vulnerable population (Little lungs)
The Program

• Key support from Public and Separate School Divisions

• Facilitated communication, planning and distribution

• Student involvement

• Media coverage

• Sponsorships
  • Stonebridge Centre Partnership
  • North Prairie Developments
  • Saskatoon & Region Home Builders Association

"The safety of our students is paramount, both inside and outside of school time. As a public institution, our school division understands the important role we play in sharing information with students and their families to promote their health and well-being. We are pleased to support the Little Lungs project to educate our students and raise awareness of radon exposure"

Barry MacDougall,
Director of Education for the Saskatoon Public School Board
Newsletters

- School Newsletter
- E-newsletters
- Inserts designed by Lung Association
- Idea to have children take an active role in the project
Program Goals

• Lung Association has significant media experience
• Media interactions
  • Program Launch
  • Appearance on community programming (TV, Radio)

• It’s important to have a stated goal for a project as a media talking point

“Test 2017 homes in 2017 where little lungs are present”
Goals

• 370 homes were tested

Test, Reduce, Breathe Easy

GSCS:
• Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools

SPS:
• Saskatoon Public Schools
Goals

- The overall goals of TAOR and Lung Association are to build awareness and increase testing rates.
- There were significant achievements:
  - Over 4600 website visits on the Little Lungs homepage
  - Several tests done outside the LL project (e.g., grandparents)
  - Suggestion of a rebate or gift-card when kits are returned
  - Support from school boards for 2017-18 school year (expansion?)
  - Builds awareness in a younger generation
Wins and Losses

Communication Among Parties
• Good and Bad
• Kit Distribution worked OK
• Concern about families that cannot afford it
• Huge uptake in certain schools
  • A champion within a certain school will significantly drive testing rates
  • Top-down vs Bottom-up?
• Lucky to partner with School Divisions
• Media coverage
Future Direction

• Target same grade level next year
• Some moderate expansion (Prairie Spirit School Division)
• Look at other school divisions in the province
• Take Action on Radon Saskatchewan plans and targets approach on an on-going basis
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