



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

National Radon Control Strategy

Phase 2 and the outlook for Phase 3

Colman Hickey

4th October 2023

Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications

Radiation Policy – Who we are



- Small unit within the Department based in **Wexford within Environment Policy Division**. In addition to radon other responsibilities in areas such as Emergency Preparedness & Response, International Engagement and Non-Ionising Radiation.
- In addition to myself Ms. Stella McKervey, Assistant Principal and Mr. Eóin Deegan, Principal Officer – **Head of Function** (who has recently been assigned responsibility for this area. Unfortunately, my colleagues are unable to attend Forum on this occasion.
- Represented at **Department Management Board level** by Mr. Philip Nugent, Assistant Secretary.

NRCS – Background



- Radon gas is recognised as a **serious threat to public health** and is estimated to be responsible for approximately 350 cases of lung cancer annually in Ireland
- The Government has established a **National Radon Control Strategy (NRCS)**, which is now in its second phase covering the period 2019 – 2024 (Phase 1 covered 2014 – 2018)
- Implementation of the strategy is overseen by **an interdepartmental and agency NRCS Co-ordination Group** chaired by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications
- The NRCS Group last met in **April 2023** and is scheduled to meet in **November 2023**

NRCS Phase 2 – Highlights of Progress (2019 – June 2022)

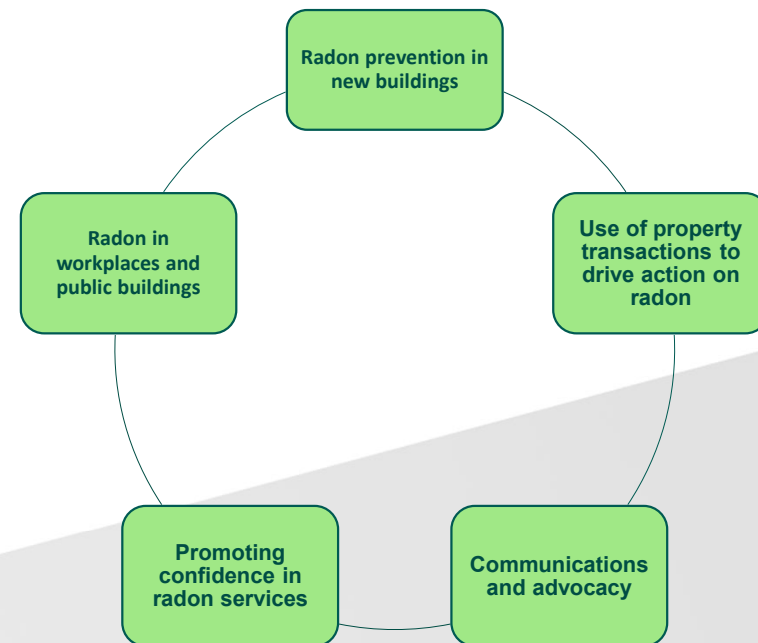


- Much of the focus of work to date in Phase 2 has been on **laying the foundations needed for Strategy Actions** that will be **most effective** in reducing indoor radon levels **between 2022 to 2024 and beyond**
- **Highlights of progress made** between 2019 and June 2022 include:
 - Improved Radon Risk Maps;
 - Development and rollout of the Evergreen Radon Awareness Campaign;
 - Strengthening and Revision of Technical Guidance Document C by ensuring new homes have optimal passive prevention systems installed; and
 - Revision of the BER Advisory Report that is required when a home is sold to include information about radon
- Details in relation to all actions are set out in the **NRCS Mid-Term Report to Government on Phase Two** available at gov.ie - Environmental Protection (www.gov.ie). This report sets out **progress made** towards delivering on the strategy and its actions between May 2019 and June 2022. Previous reports are available at www.epa.ie/publications/

NRCS Phase 2 - Summary



- The NRCS is now **statutorily based**, provided for by Regulation 64 of the Radiological Protection Act 1991 (Ionising Radiation) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 30 of 2019)
- Building on the progress made under Phase 1 of the NRCS, Phase 2 contains recommendations and **34 actions** on a broad range of measures aimed at reducing the risk from radon to people living in Ireland. These are set out in **five thematic areas**, as follows:



NRCS – Next Steps



- **Work will not end on 31 December 2024**
- Period of **transition** between NRCS Phases
- **Review, Renew and Refresh** – for Phase 3
- Phase 3 likely to be **evolutionary** versus revolutionary
- Collective and consultative approach, no monopoly on good ideas – **suggestions welcome**

NRCS Phase 3 – Outlook



- Continue to work to **reduce radon related lung cancers**
- Work to achieve this goal will be a **priority**
- Radon will be tackled using the **structured and coordinated approach** of the NRCS and its Co-ordination Group
- Implementation of the **Basic Safety Standards legislation**, including development of guidance documents for employers, extension of registration scheme for measurement services to include workplaces, and regulation of workplaces
- Some **actions in NRCS Phase 2 will continue** as part of bilateral or multilateral co-operation, for example
 - Health and Safety Authority workplace inspections
 - Training for remediation contractors
 - Training for site staff will be rolled out

NRCS - Feedback



- The **overall objective of the strategy** is to *“minimise the exposure to radon gas for people in Ireland and to reduce to the greatest extent practicable the incidence of radon related lung cancers”*
- **Successful implementation** of the strategy **requires coordinated action** from a range of Government Departments, public bodies and other stakeholders, clear identification of responsibilities and effective monitoring of progress
- **Your feedback** on the NRCS and radon is welcome by email to radiationpolicy@decc.gov.ie



Thank You