



**Roinn Cumarsáide, Gníomhaithe  
ar son na hAeráide & Comhshaoil**  
Department of Communications,  
Climate Action & Environment

# National Radon Forum 2019

## Setting the Scene

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# What is radon and why it of interest?



- Radon is a radioactive gas. It has no taste, colour or smell. It is formed in the ground by the radioactive decay of uranium which is present in all rocks and soils. You cannot see it, smell it or taste it. It can only be measured with special detectors ([www.radon.ie](http://www.radon.ie))
- Estimated as being responsible for approx. **300 cases of lung cancer per annum** in Ireland – therefore a major public health issue.

# Where is radon a concern?



- **Indoors** – particularly ground floor and basements where concentrations can build to dangerous levels
  - *Dwellings – long standing focus of policy*
  - *Workplaces – increased focus in context of new legislation (David and Sheena will discuss)*
  - *Residential institutions*

# Workplaces v Dwellings



- Possible to compel action on radon in workplaces – i.e. testing and remediation
- Can only encourage people to test and remediate in dwellings – cannot compel
- How best to increase testing in dwellings (and remediation where appropriate)?
- Behavioural aspects/research

# How is Government addressing the radon challenge?



- DCCAE lead policy Department supported by EPA technical and scientific expertise
- Cross Departmental/Agency approach to issue formalised through National Radon Control Strategy (NRCS) - Stephanie will speak on NRCS Phase 2
- EPA significant involvement in raising radon awareness and in radon research – Alison speaking on NRCS Phase 2 knowledge gaps

# Who and what is involved in NRCS?



- First four year NRCS coming to an end
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase being developed – Stephanie/Alison will speak on
- DCCA, EPA, DHPLG, HSE, HSA, GSI, DES, SEAI, CCMA, DOH.....
- Issues identified, recommendations/actions to deal with them
- Annual progress reports published by Minister

# Radon/NRCS successes



- Building Regulations 1987 – DPM/Radon Barrier – Simon will cover
- Dedicated one stop website [www.radon.ie](http://www.radon.ie) hosted by EPA
- Development of national radon map – further research in conjunction with GSI aimed at improving mapping
- Conveyancing - questions on radon testing included

# Radon Legislation



- Euratom Basic Safety Standards (**BSS**) Directive (2013/59/Euratom)
  - National Radon Action Plan = NRCS for Ireland
  - **Radon in Workplaces**
  - Radon Mapping, Reference levels, Building Standards
  - Ireland ahead of the curve on BSS requirements
- S.I. 30 of 2019 – Radiological Protection Act 1991 (Ionising Radiation) Regulations 2019

# Ongoing work/challenges



- Increasing level of radon house holder awareness/testing/remediation
- Ensuring building standards are optimised in relation to protection from radon
- Continuing research to improve understanding & address knowledge gaps

# Thank You

