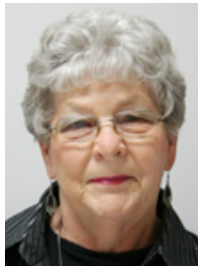


FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

President's View — Bonnie's Bits

Bonnie Krueger
FCE Council Chair



Hope everyone is ready to turn your clocks back and don't forget to check the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Nov. 11 is Veteran's Day formerly Armistice Day and the anniversary of World War I. Here in the United States it is celebrated as a National holiday and has been observed annually on this day since 1978.

Soon it will be Thanksgiving, November 26. We have lots of symbols for

our Thanksgiving.

- Turkey is an separable part of Thanksgiving.
- Cranberry sauce is turkeys favorite feast partner.
- Corn was a part of the first Thanksgiving feast and still popular.

- Beans were regarded as a third of the Indians three sisters.
- Pumpkins are a Thanksgiving favorite, just couldn't do without pumpkin pie.
- Cornucopia the horn shaped basket filled with fruit and goodies.



Have a Happy Thanksgiving with all these symbols and thank God for all we have. Blessings to all our veterans near and far.

We all had a great time at the State FCE Conference even with the long and windy ride thru the sandhills to Aimsworth. Had lots of fun when we got there. Thank you to our hostess for a

wonderful conference. Get your calendars out and mark Sept. 17-19, 2010 at Community College Park, Grand Island for the 2010 State Conference. Go to the Islands for a fun time.

FCE News & Events

Achievement Night, Oct. 26

The 2009 FCE Achievement Night will be Monday, Oct. 26, starting with dessert at 6:30 p.m. The musical program will be presented by the "Kramer Sisters." Everyone is asked to bring canned food or paper products for the annual FCE Food Bank Campaign. Clubs and members will be recognized for years of membership. If you plan to attend, call the extension office at 441-7180 and leave your name at the front desk.

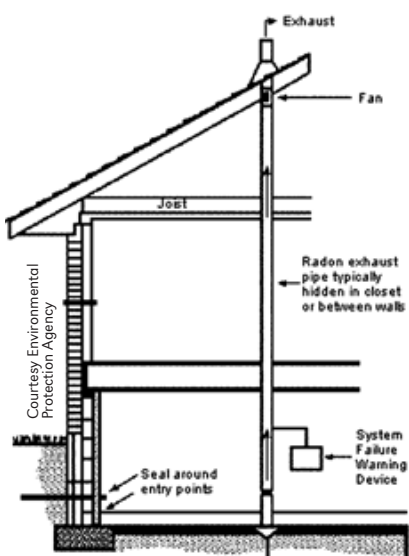
Radon—A Health Hazard

Have you tested your home for radon? If you are building a new home, check with your builder to see the proper precautions are being taken to prevent radon in your home. This is a good time to check the radon level in your home.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless gas that is harmlessly dispersed in outdoor air, but when trapped in buildings, can be harmful at elevated levels. The science on radon has been formidable over the years, but never before have we had such overwhelming scientific consensus and robust data to support the exposure to elevated levels of radon causes lung cancer in humans.

Air pressure inside your home is usually lower than pressure in the soil around your house's foundation. Because of the difference in pressure, your house acts like a vacuum, drawing radon in through foundation cracks and other openings.

Testing homes for elevated levels of radon is simple and inexpensive. And, if discovered, radon problems can be fixed. Radon test kits meeting EPA guidelines are available at local hardware stores, home improvement stores, some supermarkets, other retail outlets or directly from a laboratory. Many are priced under \$25. Testing your home for radon is as simple as opening a package, placing a radon detector in a designated area, and, after the prescribed number of days, sealing the detector back in the package and mailing it to a lab.



Typical radon mitigation system.

Short-term detectors (such as charcoal canisters) are used for two to seven days. They provide quick screening measurements indicating potential radon problems. Short-term detectors should be placed in the lowest lived-in level of the house, preferably during winter.

Long-term detectors (such as alpha track detectors) are left in place for three months to one year. They provide the advantage of averaging seasonal variations associated with radon levels. Long-term detectors generally are placed in main living areas.

Radon is measured in picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L), a measurement of radioactivity. The U.S. EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend homes with radon levels 4 pCi/L, or greater, be fixed.

Radon problems can be fixed by qualified contractors for a cost similar to many

common home repairs such as painting or having a new water heater installed (anywhere from \$500 to about \$2,500).

A variety of methods can be used to reduce radon in homes. Sealing cracks and other openings in the foundation is a basic part of most approaches to radon reduction. EPA does not recommend the use of sealing and caulking alone to reduce radon because, by itself, sealing has not been shown to lower radon levels significantly or consistently. In most cases, systems with pipes and fans are used to reduce radon. Such systems are called a sub-slab depressurization. These systems prevent radon gas from entering the home from below the concrete floor and the foundation. Similar systems can also be installed in homes with crawl spaces. Radon reduction contractors may use other methods that may also work in your home, depending on its design and other factors.

Information on testing your home for radon and how to get a test kit is also available by calling 1-800-SOS-RADON or the State Radon Office at 471-0594.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension NebGuide G-1404 "Radon in Nebraska Homes" is available online at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/g1404.pdf> and at the extension office (send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Radon: 444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A, Lincoln, NE 68528-1507 and request NebGuide G-1404).



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Get a Handle on Holiday Cleaning

Try these tips for making cleaning easier.

- Put **mats and throw rugs** at all entryways. This will help prevent dirt from being tracked into your home.
- If your pets prefer the furniture to the floor, cover their favorite upholstered pieces with attractive, **washable throws** that can be whisked out of sight when guests arrive.
- Keep a complete set of your favorite **cleaning supplies on each floor of the house**. They'll always be within easy reach for touch-up cleaning.
- Put a container of **pop-up disposable wipes** next to every bathroom and powder room sink. Encourage family members to use them every time they turn the tap water off.
- Invest in a few **small, hand-held vacuums** (cordless or with a charger) and leave them in strategic places around your home. They are perfect for quick pickups and light vacuuming.
- **Flushable bathroom wipes** are good for touching up surfaces between deeper cleanings.

Computer Cleaning — Hotspots for Germs

Think about all the surfaces you touch in your home — railings, door handles, papers and more. Washing your hands probably isn't what you do before using the computer. Instead, you probably grab a cup of coffee and turn on your computer. If you power up before you clean up, all the germs and bacteria that commuted with you are transferred from your hands to your computer. Ugh! And then, if other family members sit down at the computer, you've got all the germs that tagged along with them, too.

Before you begin, remember the two golden rules of computer cleaning:

Be sure the computer is off before you clean any part of it — keyboard, monitor screen, mouse, printer or housings.

Never spray cleaner directly onto any part of the computer. Spray it onto a cloth, and then gently wipe.

- **Keyboard:** Clean the keys with a cleaning wipe or a cloth sprayed with an all-purpose cleaner. Make this the first thing you do every morning before you turn on the computer. To remove the dirt, dust and other debris that gets caught between the keys, turn it upside down and shake gently to dislodge the particles. An air duster is also

a great aid in removing all these bits and pieces lodged inside the keyboard.

- **Mouse:** It's also a good idea to clean the mouse before the start of the workday. Use a cleaning wipe or a cloth sprayed with an all-purpose cleaner.
- **Monitor:** Use a microfiber cloth, either dry or dampened with clean water, or a product specially formulated for computer screens. If you use anything else, you run the risk of damaging the screen. Clean the monitor several times a week, as a dirty monitor can cause eyestrain.
- **Surrounding surfaces (including computer housings and desktops):** Since there are probably coffee and food stains lurking amidst the dust, use an all-purpose cleaner with a disinfectant.
- **Printer:** Consider how often you push the button on the printer and how seldom you think about cleaning it!
- And don't forget the **telephone:** Even if you're the only one using it, it's still transmission central for germs and bacteria that cause ear, nose and eye infections. Clean it daily using a hard-surface disinfectant cleaner or a wipe.

Source: Soap & Detergent Association

Food Entrepreneur Seminar, Jan. 11

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Food Processing Center is offering a one-day seminar for all individuals interested in exploring the idea of starting a food manufacturing business. The "From Recipe to Reality" seminar will be offered on Jan. 11, 2010. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. Registration deadline is Dec. 18. Contact Jill Gifford at 472-2819 or jgifford1@unl.edu for an information packet.