

NY Region:

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## **New York State Radon in Natural Gas Health Protection Bills Need Action**

**The NY State Legislative session ends this Thursday June 20, 2013. Two bills intended to protect human health from radon poisoning remain in their respective Health Committees.**

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability (DCS) applauds NYS Assembly member Linda Rosenthal and NYS Senator Diane Savino for their introduction of critical legislation to protect public health from exposure to radon in natural gas. However, without urgent action, the bills will not make it to the floor for a vote.

According to DCS Director Barbara Arrindell, "The 'Protection of Public Health From Exposure to Radon in Natural Gas Act' is urgently needed because of high radon levels in Marcellus shale gas and the short transport time for gas to travel from nearby producing areas to New York City. Most natural gas consumed now in NYC metropolitan area is from the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast, has a low radon content and a long transit time to NYC allowing most of the radioactivity to change to less harmful substances. High radon content and insufficient time for radioactive decay brings a heightened risk to the public of unsafe radon exposures. New York's voluminous draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (sGEIS) mentions some concerns about naturally occurring radioactive materials, but the sGEIS is certainly quiet concerning radon exposure to gas end-users."

In recognition of the well-documented fact that people exposed to radon have an increased likelihood of developing lung cancer, Assembly Bill A06863 and Senate Bill S04921 establish a compliance assurance system to monitor levels of radon and its decay products at the various city gates where natural gas is delivered to local distributors. Further, it requires local distributors to implement radon mitigation response programs if radon is monitored at 1.0 picocuries per liter of air or greater.

Joe Levine, DCS co-founder, said, "It is well known that all natural gas contains radon. To not take into consideration the changed radioactive saturation of the natural gas that reaches our New York State kitchens is an amazing lapse of responsibility and common sense by New York State health and environmental agencies. Fortunately, Rosenthal and Savino have recognized this and acted to protect the public. Their legislation deserves the support of anyone who uses a natural gas stove in their kitchen. Unfortunately, if citizens do not convince their representatives immediately, the Bills will not get out of their Committees before the session ends this coming Thursday, June 20, 2013."

Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, a not-for-profit, grassroots educational organization, has been educating the public about the dangers of unconventional drilling including the health threats posed by radon in Marcellus Shale natural gas since early 2008.

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**Facts About Radon in Natural Gas in NYC**

<http://www.damascuscitizensforsustainability.org/2012/09/facts-about-radon-in-natural-gas-in-nyc/>