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## Environmental Hazards in the Home

There are several possible toxins you may find inside of a home. Not all of these will be a factor in every residential property you encounter, but many homes have some concerns, and the more you know now, the more prepared you'll be to address them.

☰ Lead

☰ Mold

☰ Radon

📄 Quiz

# Lead

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## Where is Lead Found in Homes Today?

Around the world, lead has been used in paint to speed up drying and increase its longevity and durability. For this reason, lead can be found in and around residential properties. The existence of any lead that is present on a property must be promptly disclosed to potential buyers.



Lead may be found in interior and exterior paint on residential homes.





You can find lead in soil, as well as dust.



Unfortunately, lead is sometimes found in drinking water, which can be harmful.



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Although the U.S. has banned it household use since 1978, many older homes still contain lead-based paint.



CONTINUE

## Disclosing Lead

By law, sellers must disclose in writing any information about lead paint known to be in the home. If sellers have performed any lead tests, they must share the test results. For homes built before 1978, potential buyers must be provided with at least 10 days to test and check for lead hazards. While they aren't required to perform these tests, homebuyers must be allowed a chance to do so.

In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforces the regulations regarding lead-based paint, making the real estate agents and sellers liable if disclosure doesn't comply to EPA guidelines and standards.



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# Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home

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 **EPA** United States  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

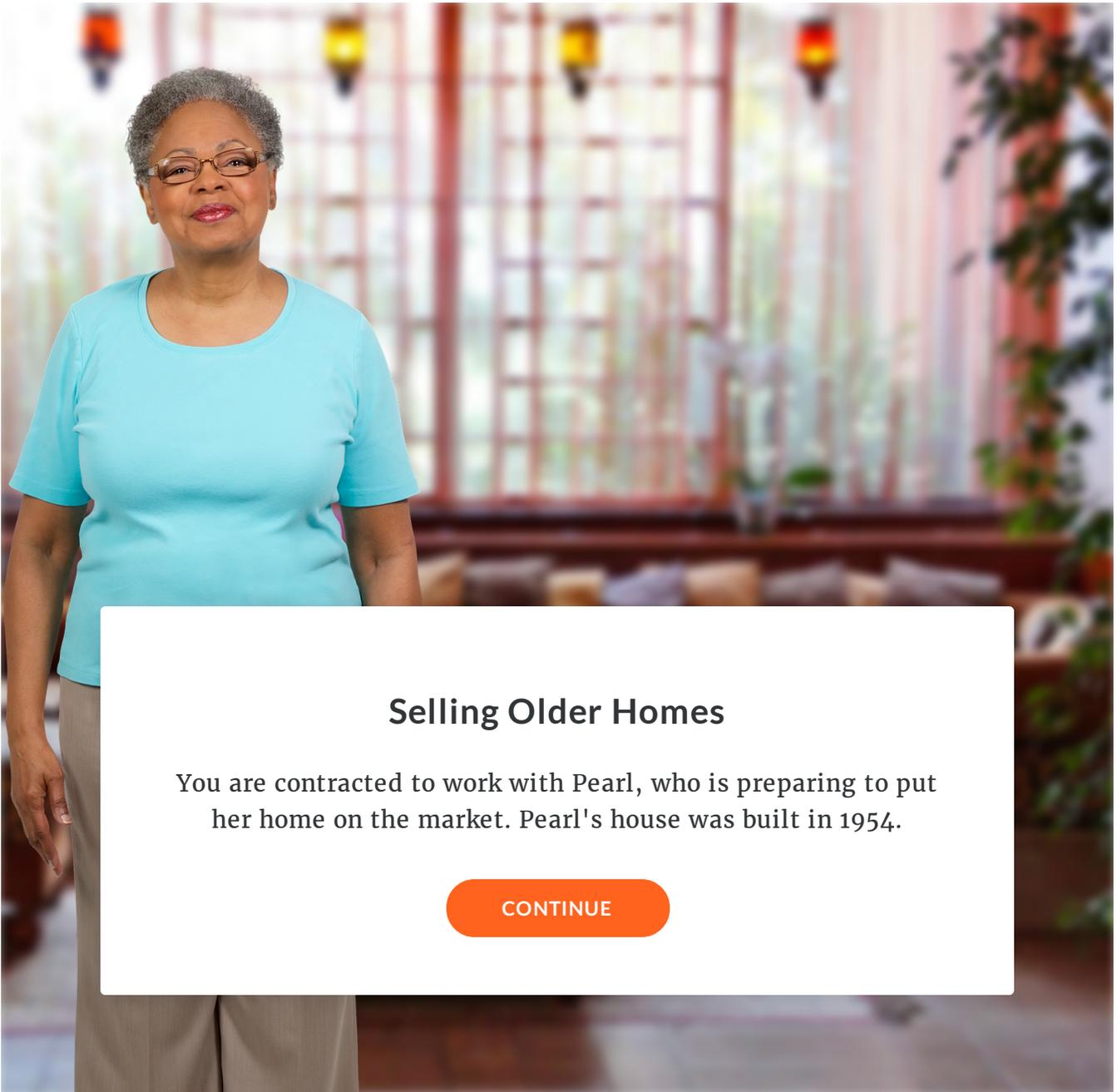
 United States  
Consumer Product  
Safety Commission

 United States  
Department of Housing  
and Urban Development

The Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act was passed to protect families from the health risks of lead-based paint.

This act, called Title X, requires listing agents, sellers of homes and lessors of rental units built before 1978 to give buyers and tenants the EPA pamphlet titled “Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home,” which outlines how to identify and control lead-based paint hazards.

CONTINUE



## Selling Older Homes

You are contracted to work with Pearl, who is preparing to put her home on the market. Pearl's house was built in 1954.

CONTINUE

### Scene 1 Slide 1

Continue → Next Slide



I know my house is a bit older. It may even contain some lead-based paint, but I'm not sure. Is there anything I legally need to do about that before I can sell this place?

1

You'll need to provide a lead-based paint disclosure to potential buyers.

2

You must pay to have a lead inspection conducted.

## Scene 1 Slide 2

0 → Next Slide

1 → Next Slide

## Scenario End

Because her home was built prior to 1978, Muriel must provide a lead-based paint disclosure form to the buyer whether she knows of any lead or not. She's not required to conduct an inspection.

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START OVER



### Scene 1 Slide 3

Continue → End of Scenario

CONTINUE



# Mold



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## Addressing Mold in Homes

Another common issue that can appear in many homes is mold. Mold can appear wherever there is both moisture and a lack of air circulation. Mold is commonly found in areas such as closets, bathrooms, and even unvented attics.



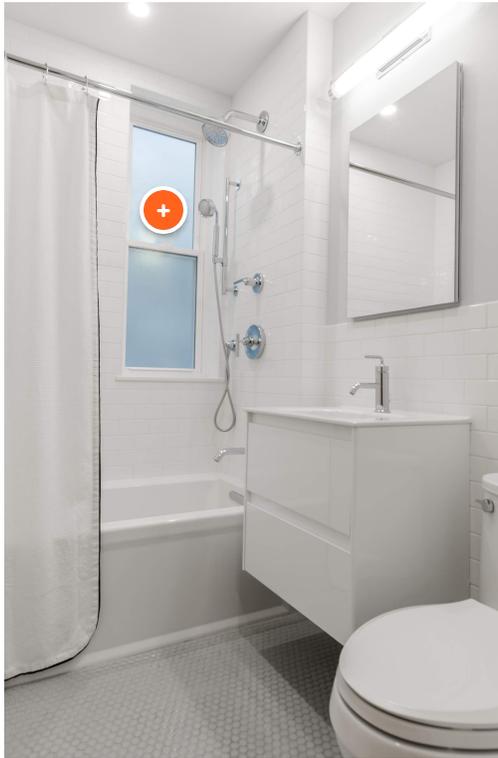


Keeping an area dry and the air circulating can help prevent moisture-loving mold from growing. Homeowners often smell mold before they ever see it, and it can cause breathing problems and serious illness. If you suspect mold, always recommend immediate testing. And if there ever appears to be a mold danger, homeowners should be prompted to leave the home immediately.

**i** Mold issues should be addressed right away. If there's even a minor water leak, it should be fixed immediately in order to prevent any mold growth. Small mold issues may be treatable by homeowners, but larger issues should be always handled by professionals.

CONTINUE





### Window mold



Mold can often be found on doors, shutters, and windows - especially in poorly ventilated areas where there is a high amount of moisture.



## Water pipes



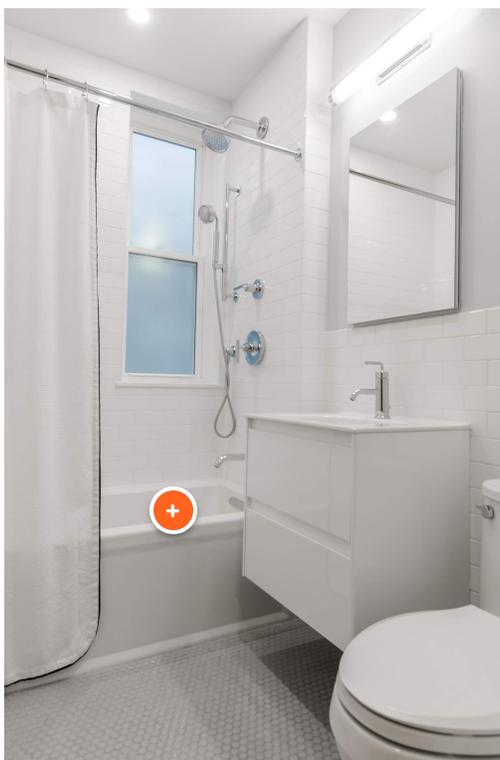
Pipes in the wall or floor are often environments where mold colonies can thrive.



### Ceiling mold



Exterior ceilings and walls are more likely to mold than interior ones because water is more likely to come under the eave of the house.



## Bath mold



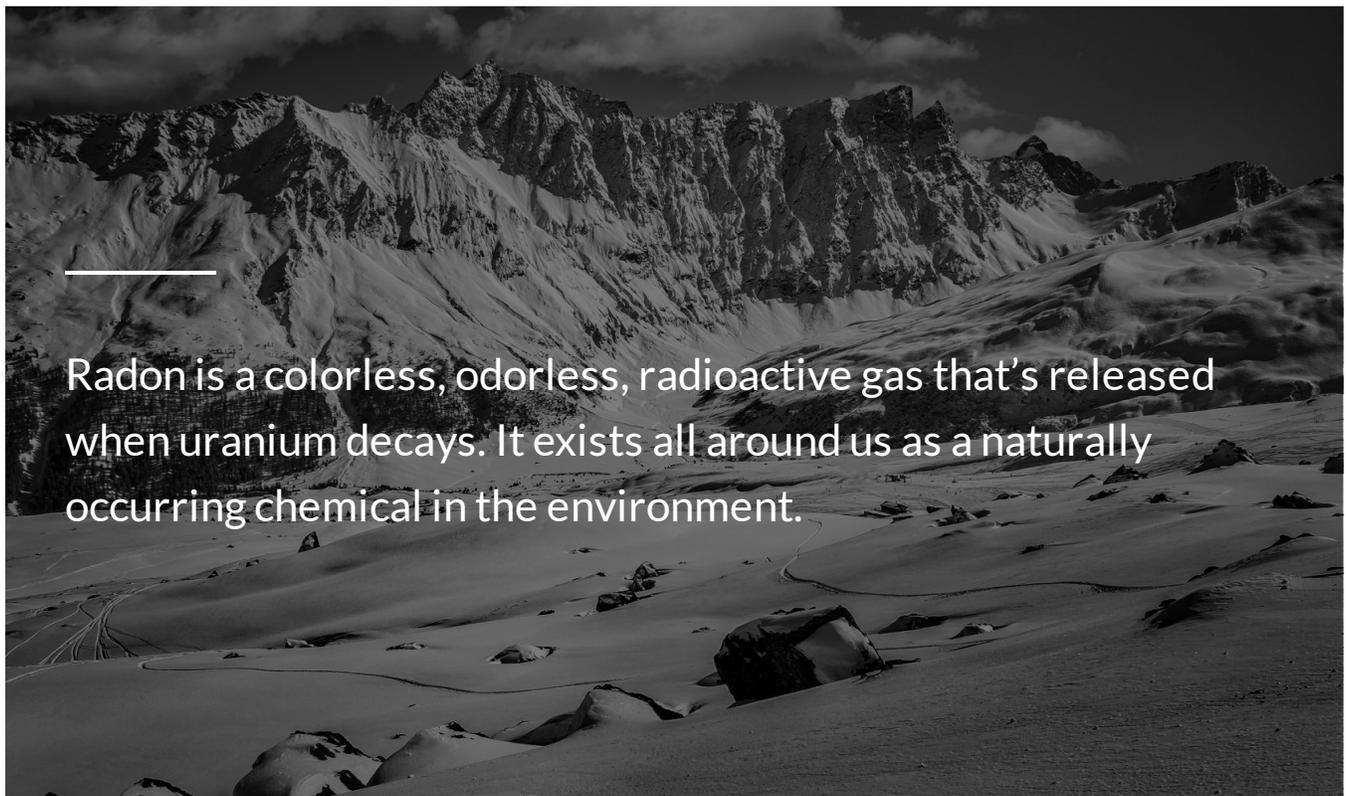
Bathtubs and showers can provide mold with an perfect environment, especially when water gets caught in corners and creates standing water puddles that can't dry easily.

[CONTINUE](#)

# Radon

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Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that's released when uranium decays. It exists all around us as a naturally occurring chemical in the environment.

While radon isn't a problem when you're walking around outside (because it's released into the atmosphere), it is a problem when it enters a home. When radon exists in an enclosed area where people live, it can cause significant health problems - namely lung cancer. In fact, radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer.

Real estate professionals aren't responsible for radon testing or mitigation, but it's important to know about what radon is, as well as the basics of testing and mitigation.

CONTINUE

## Where Radon is Found

Radon can be found in many places in and around a home. See if you can determine where you might be able to detect the presence of this radioactive gas. How can radon enter a home?

How radon enters a home

Soil tracked in from outside

Chimney cracks

Water pipes

Crack in concrete

Porous walls

**CRACKS**

**NOT how radon enters a  
home**

**Pest infestations**

**Fiberglass insulation**

**CONTINUE**

## **Radon Testing**

Radon testing is a common procedure in areas where radon might be a factor. If radon exists in higher levels, it can be pretty easily mitigated through vents and other actions, but it's best to know about it ahead of time so you can ask the seller to perform the remediation.

Step 1

## Testing



Buy a test kit or hire a professional

## Step 2

Send it in!



Send the test canister to an approved lab

Step 3

## Getting results



Lab performs tests and reports findings

## Summary

It's important for homeowners to test for radon in the home. To do this, homeowners can purchase a radon test kit, radon meter, or have a radon technician perform the testing.

If the lab test indicates that radon levels are above 4 picocuries, the homeowner can install a system that vents and filters the radon from the home. Mitigation systems may cost anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars.

CONTINUE

Lesson 4 of 4

# Quiz

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Time to see what you've learned! Here's a short quiz, which you'll need to pass in order to move on.

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Question

01/03

The EPA requires which of the following regarding lead-based paint hazards?

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- Buyers must test for lead when they purchase a home build prior to 1978.
- Real estate licensees must check for lead hazards before making a sale.
- Sellers must disclose in writing any information about lead paint known to be in the home.
- Sellers must remediate any lead hazard in the home.

Question

02/03

Which TWO environmental conditions are ideal for mold growth?

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- Moisture
- Dryness
- Lack of air circulation
- Too much air circulation

Question

03/03

Match each environmental hazard to its description.

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