

Appendix F

Radon Control Methods

(The provisions contained in this appendix are not mandatory unless specifically referenced in the adopting ordinance.)

General Comments

Radon is a radioactive gas that has been identified as a cancer-causing agent. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), it is estimated to cause many thousands of deaths each year and increases the potential for lung cancer. Radon comes from the natural (radioactive) breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water and finds its way into the air. The primary concern of this appendix is the transfer of radon gases from the soil into the dwelling through openings in the floor system.

The provisions of this appendix regulate the design and construction of radon-resistant measures intended to reduce the entry of radon gases into the living space of residential buildings.

Section AF101 establishes the scope of Appendix F, Section AF102 defines the specific terms related to the appendix, and Section AF103 discusses the construction techniques for radon-resistant construction.

Purpose

In the case of residential construction, radon is created in the soil beneath the house. Varying from one area of the United States to another, even from one house to another, the amount of radon gas in the soil is based on the soil chemistry. Since the movement of radon from the soil into the living area of a residence is enhanced as the house warms, the areas of high radon potential are typically found in portions of the United States with colder climates. The construction of an effective and efficient radon mitigation system is necessary where the radon potential reaches a point considered unacceptable. This appendix establishes prescriptive provisions to reduce the amount of radon entering a dwelling unit from the soil beneath the residence.

SECTION AF101 SCOPE

AF101.1 General. This appendix contains requirements for new construction in *jurisdictions* where radon-resistant construction is required.

Inclusion of this appendix by jurisdictions shall be determined through the use of locally available data or determination of Zone 1 designation in Figure AF101 and Table AF101(1).

- ◆ Where adopted by the jurisdiction, the provisions of this appendix provide regulations for radon-resistant construction. The jurisdiction may choose to adopt this chapter based on available data, or, alternatively, through designation as a Zone 1 structure based on Figure AF101. Zone 1 areas have a relatively high potential for radon contamination, deemed to measure at more than 4 pCi/L. See Figure AF102 for illustrations of the four basic construction methods utilized in the code for radon mitigation.

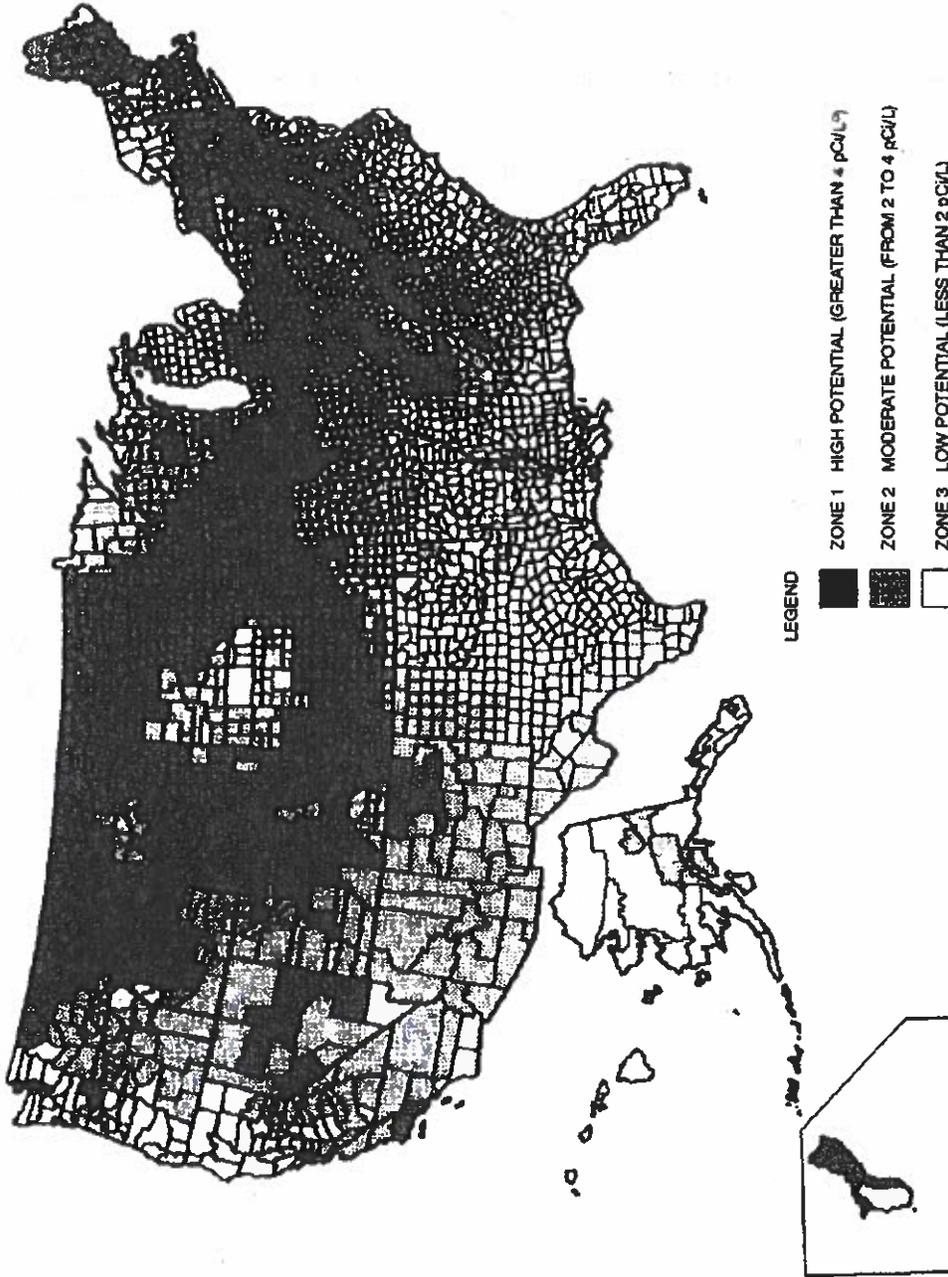
SECTION AF102 DEFINITIONS

AF102.1 General. For the purpose of these requirements, the terms used shall be defined as follows:

- ◆ This section clarifies the terminology used in this appendix. The terms take on unique and specific meanings, with many of the terms used solely in the context of radon-resistant construction.

DRAIN TILE LOOP. A continuous length of drain tile or perforated pipe extending around all or part of the internal or external perimeter of a *basement* or crawl space footing.

- ◆ Much like a drainage system for moving water away from a foundation or basement wall, a drain tile loop can consist of either drain tile or perforated pipe. It can be located on the interior or exterior side of a crawl space or basement footing.



LEGEND

- ZONE 1 HIGH POTENTIAL (GREATER THAN 4 pCi/L)
- ▨ ZONE 2 MODERATE POTENTIAL (FROM 2 TO 4 pCi/L)
- ZONE 3 LOW POTENTIAL (LESS THAN 2 pCi/L)

a. pCi/L standard for picocuries per liter of radon gas. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that homes that measure 4 pCi/L and greater be mitigated. The EPA and the U.S. Geological Survey have evaluated the radon potential in the United States and have developed a map of radon zones designed to assist *building officials* in deciding whether radon-resistant features are applicable in new construction. The map assigns each of the 3,141 counties in the United States to one of three zones based on radon potential. Each zone designation reflects the average short-term radon measurement that can be expected to be measured in a building without the implementation of radon-control methods. The radon zone designation of highest priority is Zone 1. Table AF101 lists the Zone 1 counties illustrated on the map. More detailed information can be obtained from state-specific booklets (EPA-402-R-93-021 through 070) available through State Radon Offices or from EPA Regional Offices.

FIGURE AF101
EPA MAP OF RADON ZONES

TABLE AF101(1)
HIGH RADON-POTENTIAL (ZONE 1) COUNTIES*

ALABAMA	CONNECTICUT	Morgan	Wabash	Trego	Hillsdale	Watsonwan
Calhoun	Fairfield	Moultrie	Warren	Wallace	Jackson	Wilkin
Clay	Middlesex	Ogle	Washington	Washington	Kalamazoo	Winona
Cleburne	New Haven	Peoria	Wayne	Wichita	Lenawee	Wright
Colbert	New London	Piatt	Wells	Wyandotte	St. Joseph	Yellow Medicine
Coosa		Pike	White		Washtenaw	
Franklin	GEORGIA	Putnam	Whitley	KENTUCKY		MISSOURI
Jackson	Cobb	Rock Island		Adair		Andrew
Lauderdale	De Kalb	Sangamon	IOWA	Allen	MINNESOTA	Atchison
Lawrence	Fulton	Schuyler	All Counties	Barren	Becker	Buchanan
Limestone	Gwinnett	Scott		Bourbon	Big Stone	Cass
Madison		Stark	KANSAS	Boyle	Blue Earth	Clay
Morgan	IDAHO	Stephenson	Atchison	Bullitt	Brown	Clinton
Talladega	Benewah	Tazewell	Barton	Casey	Carver	Chippewa
	Blaine	Vermilion	Brown	Clark	Chippewa	Clay
CALIFORNIA	Boise	Warren	Cheyenne	Cumberland	Cottonwood	Iron
Santa Barbara	Bonner	Whiteside	Clay	Fayette	Dakota	Jackson
Ventura	Boundary	Winnebago	Cloud	Franklin	Dodge	Nodaway
	Butte	Woodford	Decatur	Green	Douglas	Platte
COLORADO	Camas		Dickinson	Harrison	Faribault	MONTANA
Adams	Clark	INDIANA	Douglas	Hart	Fillmore	Beaverhead
Arapahoe	Clearwater	Adams	Ellis	Jefferson	Freeborn	Big Horn
Baca	Custer	Allen	Ellsworth	Jessamine	Goodhue	Blaine
Bent	Elmore	Bartholomew	Finney	Lincoln	Grant	Broadwater
Boulder	Fremont	Benton	Ford	Marion	Hennepin	Carbon
Chaffee	Gooding	Blackford	Geary	Mercer	Houston	Carter
Cheyenne	Idaho	Boone	Gove	Metcalfe	Hubbard	Cascade
Clear Creek	Kootenai	Carroll	Graham	Monroe	Jackson	Chouteau
Crowley	Latah	Cass	Grant	Nelson	Kanabec	Custer
Custer	Lemhi	Clark	Gray	Pendleton	Kandiyohi	Daniels
Delta	Shoshone	Clinton	Greeley	Pulaski	Kittson	Dawson
Denver	Valley	De Kalb	Hamilton	Robertson	Lac Qui Parle	Deer Lodge
Dolores		Decatur	Haskell	Russell	Le Sueur	Fallon
Douglas	ILLINOIS	Delaware	Hodgeman	Scott	Lincoln	Fergus
El Paso	Adams	Elkhart	Jackson	Taylor	Lyon	Flathead
Elbert	Boone	Fayette	Jewell	Warren	Mahnomen	Gallatin
Fremont	Brown	Fountain	Johnson	Woodford	Marshall	Garfield
Garfield	Bureau	Fulton	Kearny		Martin	Glacier
Gilpin	Calhoun	Grant	Kingman	MAINE	McLeod	Granite
Grand	Carroll	Hamilton	Kiowa	Androscoggin	Meeker	Hill
Gunnison	Cass	Hancock	Lane	Aroostook	Mower	Jefferson
Huerfano	Champaign	Harrison	Leavenworth	Cumberland	Murray	Judith Basin
Jackson	Coles	Hendricks	Lincoln	Franklin	Nicollet	Lake
Jefferson	De Kalb	Henry	Logan	Hancock	Nobles	Lewis and Clark
Kiowa	De Witt	Howard	Marion	Kennebec	Norman	Madison
Kit Carson	Douglas	Huntington	Marshall	Lincoln	Olmsted	McCone
Lake	Edgar	Jay	McPherson	Oxford	Otter Tail	Meagher
Larimer	Ford	Jennings	Meade	Penobscot	Pennington	Missoula
Las Animas	Fulton	Johnson	Mitchell	Piscataquis	Pipestone	Park
Lincoln	Greene	Kosciusko	Nemaha	Somerset	Polk	Phillips
Logan	Grundy	LaGrange	Ness	York	Pope	Pondera
Mesa	Hancock	Lawrence	Norton	MARYLAND	Ramsey	Powder River
Moffat	Henderson	Madison	Osborne	Baltimore	Red Lake	Powell
Montezuma	Henry	Marion	Ottawa	Calvert	Redwood	Prairie
Montrose	Iroquois	Marshall	Pawnee	Carroll	Renville	Ravalli
Morgan	Jersey	Miami	Phillips	Frederick	Rice	Richland
Otero	Jo Daviess	Monroe	Pottawatomie	Harford	Rock	Roosevelt
Ouray	Kane	Montgomery	Prairie	Howard	Roseau	Rosebud
Park	Kendall	Noble	Rawlins	Montgomery	Scott	Sanders
Phillips	Knox	Orange	Republic	Washington	Sherburne	Sheridan
Pitkin	La Salle	Putnam	Rice		Sibley	Silver Bow
Prowers	Lee	Randolph	Riley	MASS.	Stearns	Stillwater
Pueblo	Livingston	Rush	Rooks	Essex	Steele	Teton
Rio Blanco	Logan	Scott	Rush	Middlesex	Stevens	Toole
San Miguel	Macon	Shelby	Saline	Worcester	Swift	Valley
Summit	Marshall	St. Joseph	Scott		Todd	Wibaux
Teller	Mason	Steuben	Sheridan	MICHIGAN	Traverse	Yellowstone
Washington	McDonough	Tippecanoe	Sherman	Branch	Wabasha	
Weld	McLean	Tipton	Smith	Calhoun	Wadena	
Yuma	Menard	Union	Stanton	Cass	Waseca	
	Mercer	Vermillion	Thomas		Washington	

(continued)

TABLE AF101(1)—continued
HIGH RADON-POTENTIAL (ZONE 1) COUNTIES^a

NEBRASKA	Morris	Columbiana	Lehigh	Union	Fairfax	Crawford
Adams	Somerset	Coshocton	Luzerne	Walworth	Falls Church	Dane
Boone	Sussex	Crawford	Lycoming	Yankton	Fluvanna	Dodge
Boyd	Warren	Darke	Mifflin		Frederick	Door
Burt		Delaware	Monroe	TENNESSEE	Fredericksburg	Fond du Lac
Butler	NEW MEXICO	Fairfield	Montgomery	Anderson	Giles	Grant
Cass	Bernalillo	Fayette	Montour	Bedford	Goochland	Green
Cedar	Colfax	Franklin	Northampton	Blount	Harrisonburg	Green Lake
Clay	Mora	Greene	Northumberland	Bradley	Henry	Iowa
Colfax	Rio Arriba	Guernsey	Perry	Claiborne	Highland	Jefferson
Cuming	San Miguel	Hamilton	Schuylkill	Davidson	Lee	Lafayette
Dakota	Santa Fe	Hancock	Snyder	Giles	Lexington	Langlade
Dixon	Taos	Hardin	Sullivan	Grainger	Louisa	Marathon
Dodge		Harrison	Susquehanna	Greene	Martinsville	Menominee
Douglas	NEW YORK	Holmes	Tioga	Hamblen	Montgomery	Pepin
Fillmore	Albany	Huron	Union	Hancock	Nottoway	Pierce
Franklin	Allegany	Jefferson	Venango	Hawkins	Orange	Portage
Frontier	Broome	Knox	Westmoreland	Hickman	Page	Richland
Furnas	Cattaraugus	Licking	Wyoming	Humphreys	Patrick	Rock
Gage	Cayuga	Logan	York	Jackson	Pittsylvania	Shawano
Gosper	Chautauqua	Madison		Jefferson	Powhatan	St. Croix
Greeley	Chemung	Manon	RHODE ISLAND	Knox	Pulaski	Vernon
Hamilton	Chenango	Mercer	Kent	Lawrence	Radford	Walworth
Harlan	Columbia	Miami	Washington	Lewis	Roanoke	Washington
Hayes	Cortland	Montgomery		Lincoln	Rockbridge	Waukesha
Hitchcock	Delaware	Morrow	S. CAROLINA	Loudon	Rockingham	Waupaca
Hurston	Dutchess	Muskingum	Greenville	Marshall	Russell	Wood
Jefferson	Erie	Perry		Maury	Salem	
Johnson	Genesee	Pickaway	S. DAKOTA	McMinn	Scott	WYOMING
Kearney	Greene	Pike	Aurora	Meigs	Shenandoah	Albany
Knox	Livingston	Preble	Beadle	Monroe	Smyth	Big Horn
Lancaster	Madison	Richland	Bon Homme	Perry	Spotsylvania	Campbell
Madison	Onondaga	Ross	Brookings	Roane	Stafford	Carbon
Nance	Ontario	Seneca	Brown	Rutherford	Staunton	Converse
Nemaha	Orange	Shelby	Brule	Smith	Tazewell	Crook
Nuckolls	Otsego	Stark	Buffalo	Sullivan	Warren	Fremont
Otoe	Putnam	Summit	Campbell	Trousdale	Washington	Goshen
Pawnee	Rensselaer	Tuscarawas	Charles Mix	Union	Waynesboro	Hot Springs
Phelps	Schoharie	Union	Clark	Washington	Winchester	Johnson
Pierce	Schuyler	Van Wert	Clay	Wayne	Wythe	Laramie
Platte	Seneca	Warren	Codington	Williamson		Lincoln
Polk	Steuben	Wayne	Corson	Wilson	WASHINGTON	Natrona
Red Willow	Sullivan	Wyandot	Davison		Clark	Niobrara
Richardson	Tioga		Day	UTAH	Ferry	Park
Saline	Tompkins	PENNSYLVANIA	Deuel	Carbon	Okanogan	Sheridan
Sarpy	Ulster	Adams	Douglas	Duchesne	Pend Oreille	Sublette
Saunders	Washington	Allegheny	Edmunds	Grand	Skamania	Sweetwater
Seward	Wyoming	Armstrong	Faulk	Piute	Spokane	Teton
Stanton	Yates	Beaver	Grant	Sanpete	Stevens	Uinta
Thayer		Bedford	Hamlin	Sevier		Washakie
Washington	N. CAROLINA	Berks	Hand	Uintah	W. VIRGINIA	
Wayne	Alleghany	Blair	Hanson		Berkeley	
Webster	Buncombe	Bradford	Hughes	VIRGINIA	Brooke	
York	Cherokee	Bucks	Hutchinson	Alleghany	Grant	
	Henderson	Butler	Hyde	Amelia	Greenbrier	
NEVADA	Mitchell	Cameron	Jerauld	Appomattox	Hampshire	
Carson City	Rockingham	Carbon	Kingsbury	Augusta	Hancock	
Douglas	Transylvania	Centre	Lake	Bath	Hardy	
Eureka	Watauga	Chester	Lincoln	Bland	Jefferson	
Lander		Clarion	Lyman	Botetourt	Marshall	
Lincoln	N. DAKOTA	Clearfield	Marshall	Bristol	Mercer	
Lyon	All Counties	Columbia	McCook	Brunswick	Mineral	
Mineral		Cumberland	McPherson	Buckingham	Monongalia	
Pershing	OHIO	Dauphin	Miner	Buena Vista	Monroe	
White Pine	Adams	Delaware	Minnehaha	Campbell	Morgan	
NEW	Allen	Franklin	Moody	Chesterfield	Ohio	
HAMPSHIRE	Ashland	Fulton	Perkins	Clarke	Pendleton	
Carroll	Auglaize	Huntingdon	Potter	Clifton Forge	Pocahontas	
	Belmont	Indiana	Roberts	Covington	Preston	
NEW JERSEY	Butler	Juniata	Sanborn	Craig	Summers	
Hunterdon	Carroll	Lackawanna	Spink	Cumberland	Wetzel	
Mercer	Champaign	Lancaster	Stanley	Danville	WISCONSIN	
Monmouth	Clinton	Lebanon	Sully	Dinwiddie	Buffalo	

a. The EPA recommends that this county listing be supplemented with other available State and local data to further understand the radon potential of a Zone 1 area.

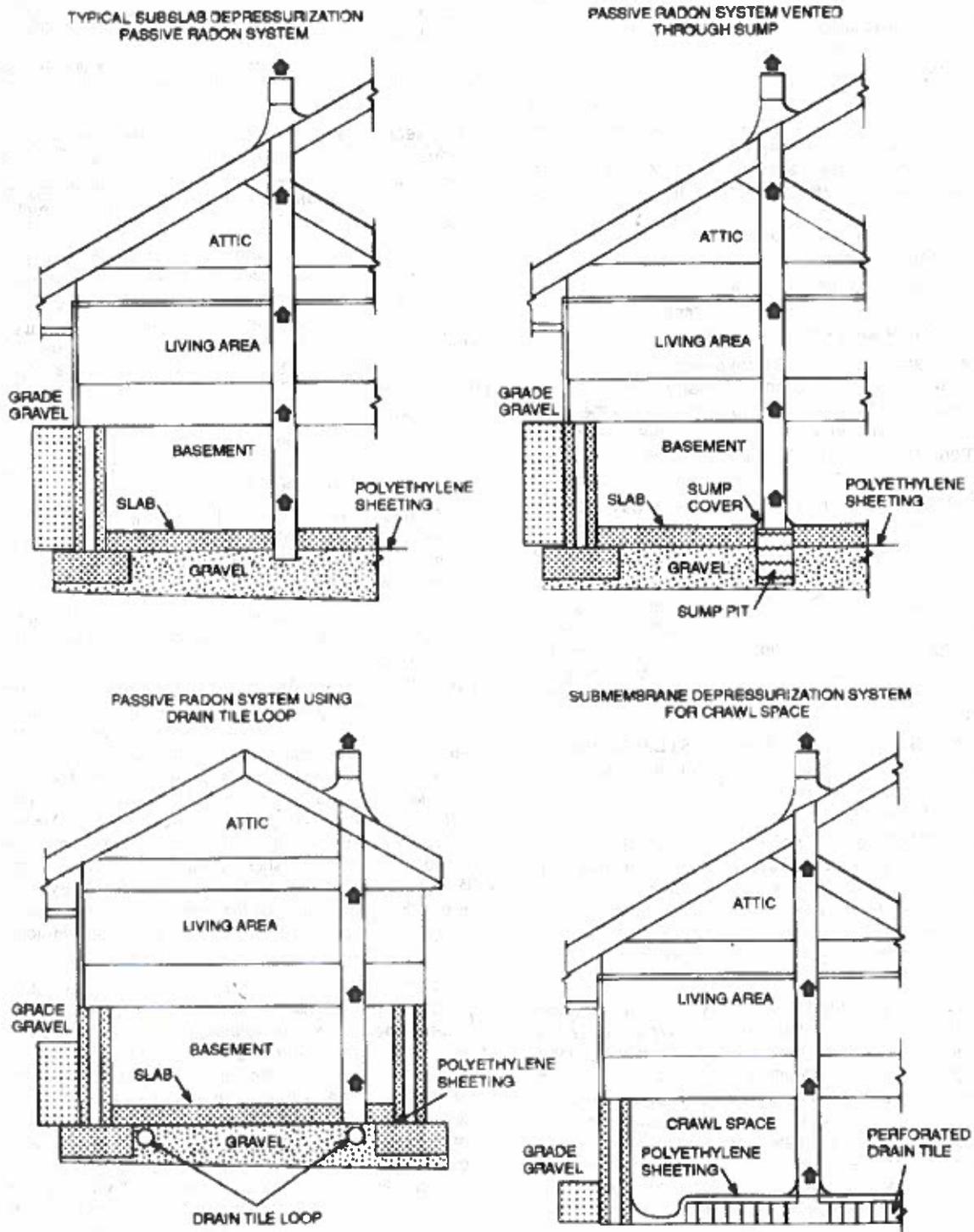


FIGURE AF102
RADON-RESISTANT CONSTRUCTION DETAILS FOR FOUR FOUNDATION TYPES

RADON GAS. A naturally occurring, chemically inert, radioactive gas that is not detectable by human senses. As a gas, it can move readily through particles of soil and rock, and can accumulate under the slabs and foundations of homes where it can easily enter into the living space through construction cracks and openings.

❖ A radioactive gas, radon occurs naturally. It is not detectable by sight, smell, or other human senses. As a gas, it can move readily through particles of soil, aggregate and small cracks and openings in foundation and slab-on-grade construction. It can accumulate under the slabs and foundations of homes where it can easily enter the living space through construction cracks and openings.

SOIL-GAS-RETARDER. A continuous membrane of 6-mil (0.15 mm) polyethylene or other equivalent material used to retard the flow of soil gases into a building.

❖ A membrane of 6-mil (0.15 mm) polyethylene is specifically identified as an acceptable material for retarding the flow of gas from the soil into a structure, if the polyethylene is applied in a continuous manner. Other membrane materials can also be used as soil-gas retarders if they provide equal or better protection.

SUBMEMBRANE DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM. A system designed to achieve lower submembrane air pressure relative to crawl space air pressure by use of a vent drawing air from beneath the soil-gas-retarder membrane.

❖ Where a basement or crawl space is present, this system can be used in much the same manner as a subslab depressurization system. Shown in Figure AF102, this method draws air from beneath the soil-gas-retarder membrane and vents it to the exterior of the building.

SUBSLAB DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM (Active). A system designed to achieve lower subslab air pressure relative to indoor air pressure by use of a fan-powered vent drawing air from beneath the slab.

SUBSLAB DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM (Passive). A system designed to achieve lower subslab air pressure relative to indoor air pressure by use of a vent pipe routed through the *conditioned space* of a building and connecting the subslab area with outdoor air, thereby relying on the convective flow of air upward in the vent to draw air from beneath the slab.

❖ One of several methods available for mitigating radon entry into a dwelling unit, this passive system uses the convective movement of air to remove radon from the area below the slab. Illustrated in Figure AF102, this method uses a vertical vent pipe between the subslab area and the exterior of the building to draw air from the subslab area to the outside. By use of a vent pipe routed through the *conditioned space* of a building that connects the subslab area with outdoor air, the system relies on the convective flow of air upward in the vent to draw air from beneath the slab.

SECTION AF103 REQUIREMENTS

AF103.1 General. The following construction techniques are intended to resist radon entry and prepare the building for post-construction radon mitigation, if necessary (see Figure AF102). These techniques are required in areas where designated by the *jurisdiction*.

❖ This section sets forth construction details designed to reduce radon movement from the soil to the interior of the building. Also see the four drawings in Figure AF102 that illustrate several basic construction methods for radon mitigation.

AF103.2 Subfloor preparation. A layer of gas-permeable material shall be placed under all concrete slabs and other floor systems that directly contact the ground and are within the walls of the living spaces of the building, to facilitate future installation of a subslab depressurization system, if needed. The gas-permeable layer shall consist of one of the following:

1. A uniform layer of clean aggregate, a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) thick. The aggregate shall consist of material that will pass through a 2-inch (51 mm) sieve and be retained by a 1/2-inch (6.4 mm) sieve.
2. A uniform layer of sand (native or fill), a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) thick, overlain by a layer or strips of geotextile drainage matting designed to allow the lateral flow of soil gases.
3. Other materials, systems or floor designs with demonstrated capability to permit depressurization across the entire subfloor area.

AF103.3 Soil-gas-retarder. A minimum 6-mil (0.15 mm) [or 3-mil (0.075 mm) cross-laminated] polyethylene or equivalent flexible sheeting material shall be placed on top of the gas-permeable layer prior to casting the slab or placing the floor assembly to serve as a soil-gas-retarder by bridging any cracks that develop in the slab or floor assembly, and to prevent concrete from entering the void spaces in the aggregate base material. The sheeting shall cover the entire floor area with separate sections of sheeting lapped at least 12 inches (305 mm). The sheeting shall fit closely around any pipe, wire or other penetrations of the material. All punctures or tears in the material shall be sealed or covered with additional sheeting.

❖ An acceptable sheeting material must be installed on top of the gas-permeable base layer to serve as a soil-gas-retarder. See the definitions for gas-permeable layer and soil-gas-retarder in Section AF102.1. In accordance with the definition of soil-gas-retarder, the sheeting material is to be a minimum 6-mil (0.15 mm) polyethylene membrane or any other flexible sheeting that provides equivalent protection. The soil-gas-retarder resists the vertical flow of radon gas into the slab or other type of floor assembly. Therefore, the membrane must cover the entire floor area of the building, with joints adequately lapped and penetrations tightly sealed. Any tears, rips, or punctures are to be adequately repaired with additional sheeting material.

AF103.4 Entry routes. Potential radon entry routes shall be closed in accordance with Sections AF103.4.1 through AF103.4.10.

- ◆ This section identifies the various points at which radon may enter a building and specifies the appropriate methods for sealing or otherwise protecting the potential entry routes.

AF103.4.1 Floor openings. Openings around bathtubs, showers, water closets, pipes, wires or other objects that penetrate concrete slabs, or other floor assemblies, shall be filled with a polyurethane caulk or equivalent sealant applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

- ◆ It is typical for a floor slab or other type of floor assembly to be penetrated by underslab or underfloor plumbing, mechanical and electrical components. Polyurethane caulk or an equivalent sealant material must be installed at all penetrations created by the passage of piping, vents, conduit, cable, or other items penetrating the floor. The sealant is to be installed in accordance with the recommendations of the manufacturer.

AF103.4.2 Concrete joints. All control joints, isolation joints, construction joints, and any other joints in concrete slabs or between slabs and foundation walls shall be sealed with a caulk or sealant. Gaps and joints shall be cleared of loose material and filled with polyurethane caulk or other elastomeric sealant applied in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

AF103.4.3 Condensate drains. Condensate drains shall be trapped or routed through nonperforated pipe to daylight.

AF103.4.4 Sumps. Sump pits open to soil or serving as the termination point for subslab or exterior drain tile loops shall be covered with a gasketed or otherwise sealed lid. Sumps used as the suction point in a subslab depressurization system shall have a lid designed to accommodate the vent pipe. Sumps used as a floor drain shall have a lid equipped with a trapped inlet.

- ◆ A gasketed or sealed lid must be provided on any sump pit that serves as the end point for a subslab or exterior drain tile loop system. Such a lid is also required if the sump pit is open to the soil. The sump lid must be designed to accommodate the vent pipe where the sump is used as the suction point in a subslab decompression system. Where used as a floor drain, the sump pit lid is to be equipped with a trapped inlet.

AF103.4.5 Foundation walls. Hollow block masonry foundation walls shall be constructed with either a continuous course of *solid masonry*, one course of masonry grouted solid, or a solid concrete beam at or above finished ground surface to prevent the passage of air from the interior of the wall into the living space. Where a brick veneer or other masonry ledge is installed, the course immediately below that ledge shall be sealed. Joints, cracks or other openings around all penetrations of both exterior and interior surfaces of masonry block or wood foundation walls below the ground

surface shall be filled with polyurethane caulk or equivalent sealant. Penetrations of concrete walls shall be filled.

- ◆ Where the foundation is made up of hollow masonry units, it is necessary to provide a means to prohibit the flow of air and potential soil gas within the cavities of the block masonry. Several methods are identified, including the use of solid masonry or solid-grouted masonry for a minimum of one course. The solid barrier must be located at or above the finished ground surface to prevent gases that enter the wall cavity from traveling up and into the living spaces. In those situations where a ledge for brick, stone, or other masonry material is provided, the barrier must be located directly below the ledge.

All penetrations, joints (including the joints where foundation walls meet concrete slab-on-grade construction), cracks and other openings that occur below ground level in masonry, concrete, wood and other types of foundation walls are to be filled with polyurethane caulk or a similar type of flexible sealant. The required penetration and opening protection must be provided on both the interior and exterior sides of the foundation walls.

AF103.4.6 Dampproofing. The exterior surfaces of portions of concrete and masonry block walls below the ground surface shall be dampproofed in accordance with Section R406.

- ◆ Dampproofing of the exterior surfaces of concrete and masonry block walls located below ground level must be done in accordance with the provisions of Section R406. A variety of methods are established for dampproofing concrete and masonry foundations.

AF103.4.7 Air-handling units. Air-handling units in crawl spaces shall be sealed to prevent air from being drawn into the unit.

Exception: Units with gasketed seams or units that are otherwise sealed by the manufacturer to prevent leakage.

- ◆ Unless sealed by the manufacturer or provided with gasketed seams to prevent leakage, air-conditioning systems located in crawl spaces must be field-sealed to eliminate the potential for air and gas to be drawn into the unit and distributed throughout the building.

AF103.4.8 Ducts. Ductwork passing through or beneath a slab shall be of seamless material unless the air-handling system is designed to maintain continuous positive pressure within such ducting. Joints in such ductwork shall be sealed to prevent air leakage.

Ductwork located in crawl spaces shall have seams and joints sealed by closure systems in accordance with Section M1601.4.1.

- ◆ Where ductwork passes through or is installed beneath a concrete floor slab, the ducts must be free of seams that may allow air and gas to enter the duct system. Seams are only permitted where it can be demonstrated that the air-handling equipment will maintain

continuous positive pressure within the ducting. In such situations, the seams must be sealed to eliminate any air leakage.

The provision allows ductwork passing through a crawl space to have seams and joints, provided they are sealed by one of the methods prescribed in Section M106.4.1. This will allow the use of fibrous glass and seamed metal ducts and field-fabricated ductwork.

AF103.4.9 Crawl space floors. Openings around all penetrations through floors above crawl spaces shall be caulked or otherwise filled to prevent air leakage.

AF103.4.10 Crawl space access. Access doors and other openings or penetrations between *basements* and adjoining crawl spaces shall be closed, gasketed or otherwise filled to prevent air leakage.

- ❖ The provisions of Section R408.4 mandate a minimum of one 18-inch by 24-inch (457 mm by 610 mm) opening to access a crawl space. Section M1305.1.4 addresses access to under-floor mechanical equipment. Where such openings or any other access points to the crawl space are provided, the doors or panels must be closed and gasketed to create an airtight separation.

AF103.5 Passive submembrane depressurization system. In buildings with crawl space foundations, the following components of a passive submembrane depressurization system shall be installed during construction.

Exception: Buildings in which an *approved* mechanical crawl space ventilation system or other equivalent system is installed.

AF103.5.1 Ventilation. Crawl spaces shall be provided with vents to the exterior of the building. The minimum net area of ventilation openings shall comply with Section R408.1.

AF103.5.2 Soil-gas-retarder. The soil in crawl spaces shall be covered with a continuous layer of minimum 6-mil (0.15 mm) polyethylene soil-gas-retarder. The ground cover shall be lapped not less than 12 inches (305 mm) at joints and shall extend to all foundation walls enclosing the crawl space area.

- ❖ An acceptable sheeting material must be installed on top of the gas-permeable base layer to serve as a soil-gas-retarder. In accordance with the requirements of the definition of "Soil-gas-retarder" in Section AF102.1, the material is to be a minimum 6-mil (0.15 mm) polyethylene membrane or any other flexible sheeting that provides equivalent protection. The soil-gas-retarder resists the vertical flow of radon gas into the slab or other type of floor assembly. Therefore, the membrane must cover the entire floor area of the building, with joints adequately lapped and penetrations tightly sealed. Any tears, rips, or punctures are to be adequately repaired with additional sheeting material.

AF103.5.3 Vent pipe. A plumbing tee or other *approved* connection shall be inserted horizontally beneath the sheeting and connected to a 3- or 4-inch-diameter (76 or 102 mm) fit-

ting with a vertical vent pipe installed through the sheeting. The vent pipe shall be extended up through the building floors, and terminate not less than 12 inches (305 mm) above the roof in a location not less than 10 feet (3048 mm) away from any window or other opening into the *conditioned spaces* of the building that is less than 2 feet (610 mm) below the exhaust point, and 10 feet (3048 mm) from any window or other opening in adjoining or adjacent buildings.

AF103.6 Passive subslab depressurization system. In *basement* or slab-on-grade buildings, the following components of a passive subslab depressurization system shall be installed during construction.

AF103.6.1 Vent pipe. A minimum 3-inch-diameter (76 mm) ABS, PVC or equivalent gas-tight pipe shall be embedded vertically into the subslab aggregate or other permeable material before the slab is cast. A "T" fitting or equivalent method shall be used to ensure that the pipe opening remains within the subslab permeable material. Alternatively, the 3-inch (76 mm) pipe shall be inserted directly into an interior perimeter drain tile loop or through a sealed sump cover where the sump is exposed to the subslab aggregate or connected to it through a drainage system.

The pipe shall be extended up through the building floors, and terminate at least 12 inches (305 mm) above the surface of the roof in a location at least 10 feet (3048 mm) away from any window or other opening into the *conditioned spaces* of the building that is less than 2 feet (610 mm) below the exhaust point, and 10 feet (3048 mm) from any window or other opening in adjoining or adjacent buildings.

AF103.6.2 Multiple vent pipes. In buildings where interior footings or other barriers separate the subslab aggregate or other gas-permeable material, each area shall be fitted with an individual vent pipe. Vent pipes shall connect to a single vent that terminates above the roof or each individual vent pipe shall terminate separately above the roof.

- ❖ An individual vent pipe is required for each unique under-slab area that defines a separate gas-permeable layer, such as those spaces separated by interior footings. The vent pipes may terminate individually above the roof or may be connected to a single vent. Also see the definition for "Gas-permeable layer" in Section AF102.1 and its commentary.

AF103.7 Vent pipe drainage. Components of the radon vent pipe system shall be installed to provide positive drainage to the ground beneath the slab or soil-gas-retarder.

- ❖ The manner of installation of a radon vent pipe system must be such that positive drainage is created to the ground beneath the floor slab or soil-gas-retarder.

AF103.8 Vent pipe accessibility. Radon vent pipes shall be accessible for future fan installation through an *attic* or other area outside the *habitable space*.

Exception: The radon vent pipe need not be accessible in an *attic* space where an *approved* roof-top electrical supply is provided for future use.

AF103.9 Vent pipe identification. Exposed and visible interior radon vent pipes shall be identified with not less than one *label* on each floor and in accessible *attics*. The *label* shall read: "Radon Reduction System."

- ◆ Interior vent pipes installed as a portion of the radon venting system must be adequately identified to reduce the potential for improper use or modification of the venting system. The identification is required for every floor level and in all accessible attics where the radon vents are exposed and visible. At a minimum, the identification label must state: "Radon Reduction System."

AF103.10 Combination foundations. Combination *basement/crawl* space or slab-on-grade/crawl space foundations shall have separate radon vent pipes installed in each type of foundation area. Each radon vent pipe shall terminate above the roof or shall be connected to a single vent that terminates above the roof.

- ◆ Where the design of the structure combines a basement with a crawl space foundation, or a slab-on-grade floor with a crawl space foundation, separate radon vent pipes are to be provided for each individual type of foundation system. The vent piping must extend above the roof, either as individual vent terminations or as a single vent termination connected to the multiple vents.

AF103.11 Building depressurization. Joints in air ducts and plenums in *unconditioned spaces* shall meet the requirements of Section M1601. Thermal envelope air infiltration requirements shall comply with the energy conservation provisions in Chapter 11. Fireblocking shall meet the requirements contained in Section R302.11.

AF103.12 Power source. To provide for future installation of an active submembrane or subslab depressurization system, an electrical circuit terminated in an *approved* box shall be installed during construction in the *attic* or other anticipated location of vent pipe fans. An electrical supply shall also be accessible in anticipated locations of system failure alarms.

- ◆ It is possible that a passive depressurization system will be converted to an active system at some future time. In anticipation of such an occurrence, an electrical circuit must be provided to an approved box. The box should be located in the attic or other location that provides access to the vent pipe fans and an access opening to the location must be provided. This section provides specific minimum dimensions for the access opening. An additional electrical supply must be provided at the anticipated future locations of system failure alarms.

