



Anticipated changes to the regulations for radon in workplaces

You might be aware that the regulations that address the control of radon exposures in workplaces are being revised in order to implement the requirements of an EU Directive. This is subject to the outcome of the usual processes and approvals.

The HSE has consulted on proposals, for revised regulations that will come into force from 1st January 2018 as the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17); these will replace the current IRR99.

The following text reflects PHE's current understanding of the requirements of the IRR17 applicable to radon exposure. However, until the regulations are published this is subject to change.

We are providing this information now because 3-month duration radon measurements that start from September 2017 will be reported to customers after the new regulations are expected to come into force.

Radon threshold

It is expected that the IRR17 will apply to workplaces with radon levels greater than 300 Bq m⁻³ as an annual average radon concentration.

This is estimated differently from the 400 Bq m⁻³ threshold specified in the IRR99, where we use seasonal corrections to estimate the *mid-winter* radon level. Since radon levels are typically lower in summer than in winter, a winter maximum of 400 Bq m⁻³ corresponds to an annual average of around 300 Bq m⁻³.

For this reason, workplaces with radon levels below the IRR99 threshold are expected to be below the IRR17 threshold.

Actions for employers

1. Workplaces where radon levels are currently above 400 Bq m⁻³, and action is required under the IRR99 to limit radon exposure to employees, should be mitigated promptly or controlled by other means. Do not wait for the IRR17 to come into force.
2. It is expected that employers will be required to notify HSE if their workplace has radon levels in excess of the IRR17 threshold. Information on what details are required and how employers can fulfil this obligation will be provided in radon measurement reports to customers.
3. It is anticipated that (under IRR17) any employers with workplaces covered by point (1) above will need to notify HSE in 2018 of the high radon levels in their workplace, even if they have previously done so under IRR99.

Further information

HSE: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/europe/euronews/dossiers/radiationprotect.htm>
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/cd282.htm>

or contact PHE: radon@phe.gov.uk