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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**December 7, 2011**

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### **ARIEL POOLE WINS 2012 STATE RADON POSTER CONTEST**

**Walton County** –Local student, Ariel Poole, is the first place winner of the 2012 Radon Poster Contest in Florida. The Florida Department of Health Radon Program congratulates this year's winner on her poster presentation titled "Kick Radon Gas". Each year, Florida participates in the National Radon Poster Contest, an annual event for students 9 to 14 years old, sponsored by the National Radon Program Services and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The contest aims to raise awareness about the harmful effects of elevated indoor radon levels. The contest goals include increasing the number of homes tested for radon and educating people about reducing radon levels at home.

"I applaud the efforts of all these students who took time to learn about radon and educate their fellow Floridians about the health hazard posed by it" said Keith Keene, CEHP, Interim Director, Division of Environmental Health.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, odorless, tasteless, radioactive gas produced from the radioactive decay of radium, found in most soils and earthen construction materials. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. after smoking, and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that radon is responsible for more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths per year. Data collected by the department indicates that 1 in 5 Florida residences have elevated radon levels. The only way to know the radon levels in your home is to test.

The U.S. Surgeon General issued this Health Advisory in January 2005. "Indoor radon gas is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and breathing it over prolonged periods can present a significant health risk to families all over the country. It's important to know that this threat is completely preventable. Radon can be detected with a simple test and fixed through well-established venting techniques."

For additional information:

Contact the Florida Radon Program at 1-800-543-8279 or visit the following websites:

Environmental Protection agency – [www.epa.gov/radon](http://www.epa.gov/radon)

Centers for Disease Control - [www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/brochure/profile\\_radon.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/brochure/profile_radon.htm) or Florida Department of Health - [www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/radon](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/community/radon)

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