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Florida Students Take **First** and **Second** Place in the 2008 National Radon Poster Contest

by Jorge Laguna, Florida Radon Program

The National Radon Poster Contest, sponsored by the National Safety Council and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is an annual event for students 9–14 years old. Aiming 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. Last fall, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) Radon Program participated and Florida won!

The DOH Radon Program received 49 contest entries from across the state. The posters chosen for entry into the national contest were:

NATIONAL FIRST PLACE WINNER: “Science Sue Talks about Radon,” by Sara Garcia. Sara, 13 years old, attends the Hollywood Academy of Arts and Sciences in Hollywood.

NATIONAL SECOND PLACE WINNER: “Can Your House Pass the Test?” by Daniel Carr. Daniel, 11 years old, is home-schooled and lives in Tampa.

FLORIDA THIRD PLACE WINNER: “Ghost of Radon,” by Raimy Engel. Raimy, 14 years old, attends John Paul II Catholic High School in Tallahassee.

In December 2007, the winners for the official 2008 posters were chosen in Washington, D.C. Congratulations to national winners Sara Garcia and Daniel Carr—their posters are showcased on the National Safety Council Web site (www.nsc.org/resources/issues/radon/poster_winners.aspx).

The 2009 Contest

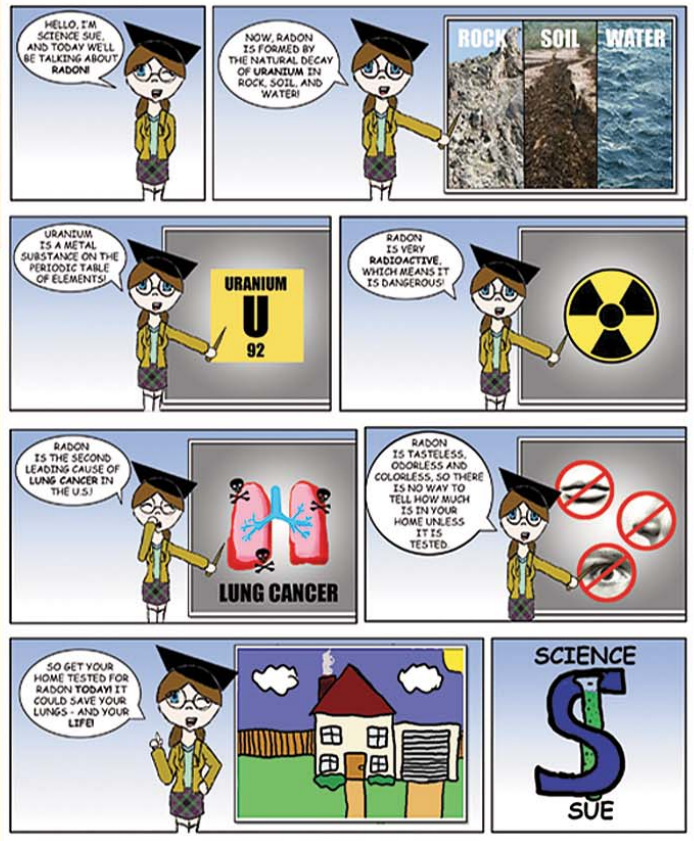
The DOH Radon Program will again coordinate the Florida portion of the National Radon Poster Contest. We invite schools to partner with DOH and encourage students to participate in this year’s contest. “The contest participants will help educate the public about radon, and provide their fellow Floridians with the knowledge to protect themselves from radon-induced lung cancer,” said Clark Eldredge, Environmental Administrator of the Division of Environmental Health, Radon Program.

DOH will accept posters from Sept. 1–Oct. 15, 2008 and announce the winners on Dec. 9, 2008. National poster winners will be unveiled at the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., Jan. 2009.

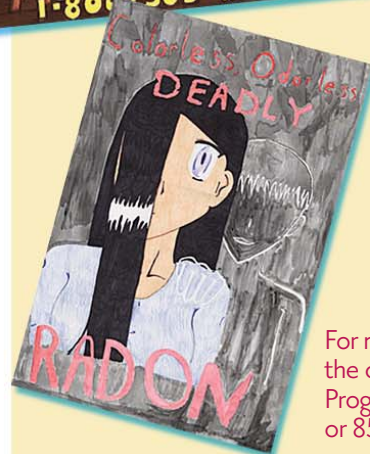
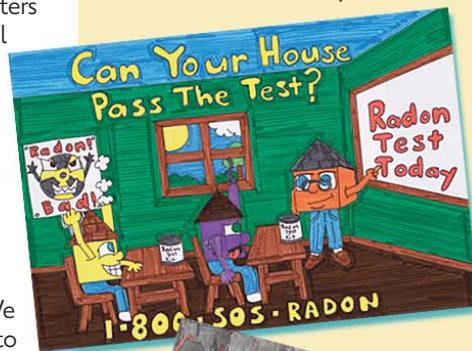
The first-place national winner, a parent, and teacher (or a sponsoring organization’s representative) wins an all-expense paid trip to the awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. The winning artwork’s message—reproduced on t-shirts, mouse pads, book marks and posters—will be distributed nationally in 2009.

Clark Eldredge contributed to this article.

Science Sue Talks About: RADON



ABOVE: “Science Sue Talks about Radon,” by Sara Garcia. BELOW, FROM TOP: “Can Your House Pass the Test?” by Daniel Carr and “Ghost of Radon,” by Raimy Engel.



More About Radon

Radon, a naturally occurring, radioactive gas, is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers and the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking. Radon is colorless, odorless, and tasteless and causes approximately 21,000 lung cancer deaths annually.

In Florida, radon problems have been found in every region of the state. There are elevated radon levels in single-story homes, schools, office buildings and as high up as the 24th floor of high-rise condominiums.

The only way to know if you are exposed to high radon levels is to have your home tested.

For more information about radon and the contest contact the DOH Radon Program: toll-free, 1.800.543.8279 or 850.245.4288.