CAHI™ CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF HOME INSPECTORS, INC.

MONTHLY

News and Views from the Connecticut Association of Home Inspectors, Inc. October 2008

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Meeting Dates

Oct 22 ***Solar Heating*** **- Elizabeth Saede, L.S. Remodeling, LLC & Michelle Herbert, 1st Light Energy.**

Holiday Inn
201 Washington Ave
North Haven
(203) 239-6700

Can Building Materials Elevate Radon Levels?

Granite

There has been concern about the possibility of granite counter tops or granite tile raising the radon levels or emitting Gamma radiation. The concern is radon emitted from the decay of radium in the granite can easily escape from unsealed surfaces of the granite into the air or that gamma emissions from any radioactive elements in the stone may be excessively high. Studies have found that very few granites contain enough radium (the parent of radon) and or other radioactive elements to be any concern.

There are however many granites that have measurable gamma radiation and some that will emit significant radon. In general gamma exposure is considered a very slight risk. Many common materials such as miracle grow or other fertilizers emit elevated gamma levels.

The radon association AARST has recommended that if you are concerned about granite installed in your home you should purchase three radon in air test kits and place them in the following locations: one in the lowest livable area (basement), one in the main living area (bedroom or living room) and one in the kitchen, 20 inches or more from the granite. If the any test kits are at or above the EPA guideline of 4.0 pCi/l consult a radon professional listed with your state radon program. Some surface coatings that are applied to the un-polished or polished side during the manufacturing can reduce the radon emanation rate significantly from that side but may not reduce the total radon emanation from the granite. The effect of sealing all sides is unknown. The surface sealants applied after the granite is cut to size by the installation companies typically has a breathable characteristics that may not restrict radon movement.

Concrete

There is also typically some radium in concrete. In almost all cases this does not contribute significantly to the indoor radon levels. There have been a number of cases where the radon in the concrete did cause the rooms adjacent to the concrete to be above the EPA action level of 4.0 pCi/L. In the buildings where this happened there was typically a concrete ceiling as well as a concrete slab and the air change rate (ventilation rate) was extremely low. Newer multi-story condo buildings that are constructed with concrete slabs and ceilings often have only one exterior wall that allows natural infiltration ventilation of the unit. If there is no mechanical outdoor air ventilation incorporated into the HVAC system, the air change rate in the dwelling may be so low that the small amount of radon coming from the concrete will cause the indoor radon levels to climb above the EPA action level. This will be even more likely to take place when there is moderate temperatures outside and the windows are not opened. During moderate temperatures there is no temperature difference driven airflow into or out of these units.

Bill's paper on Elevated Radon in High Rise Building from Concrete can be found at http://www.wpb-radon.com/pdf/Radon%20in%20high%20rise%20condominium.pdf

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President's Corner

Woody Dawson

I would like to start off by thanking you for electing me as President. My intent is to serve you in my full capacity. If at any time a member has any questions, they should not hesitate to contact me, or any board member, with any concerns they may have to help better our association.

I would also like to thank the past President, Bernie Caliendo, for his exhaustive effort and also his board members for making this association what it is today. Good luck Bernie, now you can devote all your time to your business and family. (I am thanking you also for the whole association. I know that they have all appreciated and respected you.)

For the very few people in the association that do not know me, my name is Woody Dawson. I have been in the construction business most of my life. When I retired from the construction business, I realized that I had too much energy to retire and decided to go into the home inspection business. I always enjoyed helping people. This was my gratification in life. My home inspection business is Dawson Real Estate Inspections Inc. I am the President and founder of the company. I am a licensed real estate inspector and former licensed environmental inspector. I have performed thousands of structural inspections, including termite inspections, water tests, radon tests, asbestos tests, lead paint testing, septic tests, and formaldehyde tests. I am a former member of the Sewage Disposal Association, New Haven Board of Realtors, and American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologies. My political experience includes being a former member of the Cheshire Building Board of Appeals and Cheshire Zoning Board of Appeals, and a current member of the Cheshire Planning and Zoning Commission and the Cheshire Republican Town Committee. I am now serving a 6-year term on the Cheshire Planning and Zoning Commission. I am a current member of the First Congregational Church of Cheshire, Friends of Cheshire Library, the Pyramid Shriners of Milford, the Scottish Rites Lafayette Consistory, Bristol Rod and Gun Club and the Elks Lodge. I am a former President and lifetime member of the Kiwanis Club of Cheshire. I am also a former President of the Cheshire Masonic Temple Association. My hobbies include boating, fishing, and hunting, and spending as much time as possible at the Rod and Gun Club. I hold a pistol permit in the State of Connecticut.

Dealing with some CAHI business, I, as President, and the board members would like to thank all those members who have renewed their membership for the coming year on time. For those of you who have not yet done so or have misplaced your application for renewal, please go to our website, www.ctinspect.com. Renew online or download the application and send it in with your payment promptly.

At our last association meeting on September 24th, there was an approximate turnout of 80 (+/-) members. At the meeting, Scott Monforte handed out a survey on suggested speakers from the association's members and all but five of whom attended the meeting, did not fill out the survey. Scott will have his hands full accommodating the members. Good luck Scott, and for those that do not know, Scott Monforte is my new, elected Vice President.

At our last Board meeting, we had John, who manages and oversees the CAHI website, discuss with us any improvements that could be made to the web site. There were suggestions from the Board Members on setting up a section of the web site for used inspection equipment that could be purchased. This feature would be open to all members to use, see, or purchase used equipment. We are currently working on that now. This does not mean furniture, bicycles, etc. Only used inspection equipment can be sold on the web site.

During tough times, I would suggest to all home inspectors to tighten their belts and have a serious discussion with their accountants and know what their cost basis' are for running a business. This will help you know what your overhead is and how to price inspections accordingly. We are all professionals and would like to run our businesses as professionals.

As President of your association, the Board and I are trying to tighten up our belts as well, and I decided to have our Board meetings on the same night as the regular meetings to save expenses for the association. The Board members will be working on a budget for this coming year and we will do all we can to eliminate waste of spending, if any.

I will see you all soon. I hope you and your families enjoy the fall foliage and hope you all continue working hard at building your business as a professional. This will enhance our association.

Your President,

Woody Dawson

P.S. I would encourage all members to get familiar with all board members and at every meeting, introduce yourself to the lady or gentleman sitting next to you.

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What is Required to Have a Building Material Elevate Radon Levels

There are three factors that influence whether granite or concrete can raise the radon levels in a room or an entire home.

- Average Emanation Rate is Significant
- Quantity of the Material is Large Enough
- Ventilation Rate of the Room the Material Occupies is Low

The emanation rate of radon from granite can only be determined by making an actual measurement of the surface emanation. There are several methods of making this measurement. Bill's paper on Measuring Emanation from Granite & Concrete (http://www.wpb-radon.com/pdf/measuring%20Radon%20Emanation%20from%20concrete%20&%20granite.pdf) reviews these methods.

Although placing a radon detector under a container that is sealed to the surface may produce an elevated radon level it will not measure the emanation rate unless the method has been previously calibrated and all the factors that influence the results carefully compensated for. An even more critical component is the fact that the emanation rate across the surface can vary significant and the surface coatings may be causing more or less emanation from one surface than another. Therefore a flux measurement of one area of a granite surface is unlikely to be the average of the entire granite piece. Extrapolating the measurement from a single location of only one surface of the granite is likely to lead to large errors. Multiple measurements of the flux from both sides of the granite are necessary to determine if the emanation rate is uniform or if it varies significantly.

The next important variable is the quantity of granite that is installed; a kitchen may have 40 square feet of granite while another home may have 400 square feet of tile. The tile may have ten times less emanation than a countertop that is suspended on cabinets but in this case it has ten times more emanation surface area.

The final consideration is the ventilation rate of the area the granite is located in. Ventilation determines if radon emanation from a source will measurably elevated the radon levels, there are two types of ventilation happening inside a home, internal air circulation and inside to outside air exchange. The air change rate is typically measured in units of Air Change per Hour (ACH). 1.0 ACH is considered very high ventilation rate and 0.1 is considered a very low air change ventilation rate. The other ventilation factor, internal air circulation is very difficult to measure unless an air handler is uniformly mixing the air inside the home. Obviously a bathroom room with no mechanical air circulation or exhaust vent operation will have a very low internal air change rate when the door is closed. During this time a bathroom with a lot of granite tile that emanates radon would reach its highest level after a few cycles of the ventilation rate. The lower the ventilation rate the longer it takes to reach the maximum radon level. 0.1 ACH requires10 hours for the air exchange to equal the quantity of air in the room. After 3 or 4 of these exchanges or about 30 to 40 hours the original air has most likely been replaced. The radon in this bathroom is therefore accumulating in the volume of the bathroom but once the bathroom door is opened it is accumulating in a much larger space that likely has a much higher ACH rate.

The point is that radon level increases will be greatly affected by the ACH rate, the internal air circulation and the size of the room the air change is taking place in. The radon level is directly related to the ACH rate and the volume of space this ACH is happening in, not how long it takes to get to the maximum radon level. A kitchen is typically open to the main living areas of the home and this area is often connected to an internal circulation system which makes the entire house the volume when the air handler is operating.

A few calculated examples will illustrate the results. A 10' by 15' bathroom with an 0.1 ACH rate and 200 ft2 of granite tile that emanates at a rate of 10 pCi/ft2/hr will have 2000 pCi per hour moving into an air exchange rate of 10 X 15 X 8 X 28 X 0.1 or 3360 liters per hour. The 2000 pCi/hr will be diluted by the 3360 liters to cause the radon levels to rise 0.6 pCi/l. If the ventilation was half this amount the radon levels would be 2x higher.

I recommend visiting Bill Brodhead's web site for more information:
http://www.wpb-radon.com/radon_in_concrete.html

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Position Statement
Granite Countertops and Radon Gas

From the Technical and Science Committee
of the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST)

Radon Risk

The primary concern about indoor radon gas is the increased risk of lung cancer that exists from breathing radon and its byproducts. The magnitude of the risk depends on the radon concentration in the air you breathe and how long you are breathing it. Radon gas is a serious national concern. The risk of radon-related lung cancer increases the longer you are exposed although any exposure to radon poses some risk.

Testing for radon in the air you breathe should be a high priority and the first step for anyone concerned about radon gas. The US Surgeon General, US EPA, AARST and the American Lung Association recommend that all homes be tested for radon gas.

At this time, the EPA does not believe sufficient data exists to conclude that the types of granite commonly used in countertops are significantly increasing indoor radon levels.

Radon Sources Including Granite

Soil, sand, and rock underneath the home are the primary sources of indoor radon gas. The soil under a house always contains traces of uranium that eventually decays into radium that then decays directly into radon. This soil constitutes an enormous surface area for release of radon gas into the air and into buildings. Materials inside a building such as concrete, granite, slate, marble, sand, shale and other stones can also contain traces of radium that release radon with varying intensities. While natural rocks such as granite may emit some radon gas, the subsequent levels of radon in the building that are attributable to such sources are not typically high. The contribution from building materials to the indoor radon concentration is very dependent upon the building ventilation rate.

Appropriate Radon Testing Methods

Direct measurements in a building of the gamma radiation or radon emanation from a material, such as granite, is not a reliable indicator of radon concentrations that will be in the air you breathe. Attempts to use such measurements for estimating risk are subject to large errors due to the:

a) wide variability of radon emanation rates across the surface of granite.
b) significant variability in ventilation rates from home to home and room to room.
c) volume of space that the building material is contained in.

This position statement does not address the risk, if any, of gamma radiation from indoor building materials.

Practical Diagnostic Test

Diagnostic measurements of the radon in the air you breathe can provide better risk estimates.

Perform a radon measurement according to testing protocols (specified by EPA or AARST as noted below) in the lowest level (or lived-in level) of your home.

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At the same time, perform another test in the room where the granite countertop or other suspect building material exists. You may also want to test in a highly occupied room, like your bedroom. (Use different rooms if these locations are on the same floor.)

Place the test devices at least 20 inches off the floor according to testing protocols and at least 20 inches away from the countertop or suspect material. Carefully follow all manufacturers' test kit instructions.

You may also contact a State licensed or nationally certified radon measurement professional to conduct the measurements for you.

If any of the test results are at or above the EPA recommended action levels retest these areas to confirm the initial results.

Interpreting Radon Test Results

For guidance on test results and protocols for measurements of radon in the air, see documents such as EPA's Citizens Guide to Radon or other EPA publications at http://www.epa.gov/radon/pubs. Other information and publications for measuring radon in the air for home and multi-family dwellings can also be found at http://www.aarst.org.

If confirmed measurements are at, or above, the EPA recommended action levels, contact a State licensed or nationally certified mitigation professional to fix the home to reduce the radon levels.

Reducing Radon Concentrations

The best approach to reduce radon in the home is to install an active soil depressurization system (ASD) and reduce the entry of radon coming from the soil. In some cases, increasing the entry of outdoor air to the home is an appropriate method to reduce radon levels by dilution and improve indoor air quality. Both of these methods require a qualified radon mitigation professional to design and install the appropriate radon reduction system. Only in extreme cases would removal of the granite be necessary to reduce the radon concentration, assuming appropriate measurements confirm it as the significant source.

In Conclusion

Testing the air you breathe is the best method to determine your risk from radon, whether the source of the radon is from the soil or from a material inside the building.

We support peer-reviewed research to identify and quantify the contributions of various building materials to indoor radon concentrations.

This statement was provided by the Science and Technical Committee of the American Association of Radon Scientists and Technologists (AARST).

This statement was prepared by AARST professionals with no external funding or other support. The sole purpose of this statement is educational and to reduce lung cancer deaths from elevated concentrations of indoor radon.

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An Introduction to Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

What Causes Indoor Air Problems?

Indoor pollution sources that release gases or particles into the air are the primary cause of indoor air quality problems in homes. Inadequate ventilation can increase indoor pollutant levels by not bringing in enough outdoor air to dilute emissions from indoor sources and by not carrying indoor air pollutants out of the home. High temperature and humidity levels can also increase concentrations of some pollutants.

Pollutant Sources

There are many sources of indoor air pollution in any home. These include combustion sources such as oil, gas, kerosene, coal, wood, and tobacco products; building materials and furnishings as diverse as deteriorated, asbestos-containing insulation, wet or damp carpet, and cabinetry or furniture made of certain pressed wood products; products for household cleaning and maintenance, personal care, or hobbies; central heating and cooling systems and humidification devices; and outdoor sources such as radon, pesticides, and outdoor air pollution.

The relative importance of any single source depends on how much of a given pollutant it emits and how hazardous those emissions are. In some cases, factors such as how old the source is and whether it is properly maintained are significant. For example, an improperly adjusted gas stove can emit significantly more carbon monoxide than one that is properly adjusted.

Some sources, such as building materials, furnishings, and household products like air fresheners, release pollutants more or less continuously. Other sources, related to activities carried out in the home, release pollutants intermittently. These include smoking, the use of unvented or malfunctioning stoves, furnaces, or space heaters, the use of solvents in cleaning and hobby activities, the use of paint strippers in redecorating activities, and the use of cleaning products and pesticides in house-keeping. High pollutant concentrations can remain in the air for long periods after some of these activities.

Amount of Ventilation

If too little outdoor air enters a home, pollutants can accumulate to levels that can pose health and comfort problems. Unless they are built with special mechanical means of ventilation, homes that are designed and constructed to minimize the amount of outdoor air that can "leak" into and out of the home may have higher pollutant levels than other homes. However, because some weather conditions can drastically reduce the amount of outdoor air that enters a home, pollutants can build up even in homes that are normally considered "leaky".

How Does Outdoor Air Enter a House?

Outdoor air enters and leaves a house by: infiltration, natural ventilation, and mechanical ventilation. In a process known as infiltration, outdoor air flows into the house through openings, joints, and cracks in walls, floors, and ceilings, and around windows and doors. In natural ventilation, air moves through opened windows and doors. Air movement associated with infiltration and natural ventilation is caused by air temperature differences between indoors and outdoors and by wind. Finally, there are a number of mechanical ventilation devices, from outdoor-vented fans that intermittently remove air from a single room, such as bathrooms and kitchen, to air handling systems that use fans and duct work to continuously remove indoor air and distribute filtered and conditioned outdoor air to strategic points throughout the house. The rate at which outdoor air replaces indoor air is described as the air exchange rate. When there is little infiltration, natural ventilation, or mechanical ventilation, the air exchange rate is low and pollutant levels can increase.

Indoor Air Pollution and Health

Health effects from indoor air pollutants may be experienced soon after exposure or, possibly, years later.

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Immediate effects

Immediate effects may show up after a single exposure or repeated exposures. These include irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat, headaches, dizziness, and fatigue. Such immediate effects are usually short-term and treatable. Sometimes the treatment is simply eliminating the person's exposure to the source of the pollution, if it can be identified. Symptoms of some diseases, including asthma, hypersensitivity pneumonitis, and humidifier fever, may also show up soon after exposure to some indoor air pollutants.

The likelihood of immediate reactions to indoor air pollutants depends on several factors. Age and preexisting medical conditions are two important influences. In other cases, whether a person reacts to a pollutant depends on individual sensitivity, which varies tremendously from person to person. Some people can become sensitized to biological pollutants after repeated exposures, and it appears that some people can become sensitized to chemical pollutants as well.

Certain immediate effects are similar to those from colds or other viral diseases, so it is often difficult to determine if the symptoms are a result of exposure to indoor air pollution. For this reason, it is important to pay attention to the time and place symptoms occur. If the symptoms fade or go away when a person is away from home, for example, an effort should be made to identify indoor air sources that may be possible causes. Some effects may be made worse by an inadequate supply of outdoor air or from the heating, cooling, or humidity conditions prevalent in the home.

Long-term effects

Other health effects may show up either years after exposure has occurred or only after long or repeated periods of exposure. These effects, which include some respiratory diseases, heart disease, and cancer, can be severely debilitating or fatal. It is prudent to try to improve the indoor air quality in your home even if symptoms are not noticeable.

While pollutants commonly found in indoor air are responsible for many harmful effects, there is considerable uncertainty about what concentrations or periods of exposure are necessary to produce specific health problems. People also react very differently to exposure to indoor air pollutants. Further research is needed to better understand which health effects occur after exposure to the average pollutant concentrations found in homes and which occurs from the higher concentrations that occur for short periods of time.

Here is some more information about indoor air pollutants. For additional information please visit the EPAs website @ http://www.epa.gov/iaq/ia-intro.html

Formaldehyde

Formaldehyde is an important chemical used widely by industry to manufacture building materials and numerous household products. It is also a by-product of combustion and certain other natural processes. Thus, it may be present in substantial concentrations both indoors and outdoors.

Sources of formaldehyde in the home include building materials, smoking, household products, and the use of un-vented, fuel-burning appliances, like gas stoves or kerosene space heaters. Formaldehyde, by itself or in combination with other chemicals, serves a number of purposes in manufactured products. For example, it is used to add permanent-press qualities to clothing and draperies, as a component of glues and adhesives, and as a preservative in some paints and coating products.

In homes, the most significant sources of formaldehyde are likely to be pressed wood products made using adhesives that contain urea-formaldehyde (UF) resins. Pressed wood products made for indoor use include: particleboard (used as sub-flooring and shelving and in cabinetry and furniture); hardwood plywood paneling (used for decorative wall covering and used in cabinets and furniture); and medium density fiberboard (used for drawer fronts, cabinets, and furniture tops). Medium density fiberboard contains a higher resin-to-wood ratio than any other UF pressed wood product and is generally recognized as being the highest formaldehyde-emitting pressed wood product.

Other pressed wood products, such as softwood plywood and flake or oriented strand board, are produced for exterior construction use and contain the dark, or red/black-colored phenol-formaldehyde (PF) resin. Although formaldehyde is present in both types of resins, pressed woods that contain PF resin generally emit formaldehyde at considerably lower rates than those containing UF resin.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a mineral fiber that has been used commonly

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in a variety of building construction materials for insulation and as a fire-retardant. EPA and CPSC have banned several asbestos products. Manufacturers have also voluntarily limited uses of asbestos. Today, asbestos is most commonly found in older homes, in pipe and furnace insulation materials, asbestos shingles, millboard, textured paints and other coating materials, and floor tiles.

Elevated concentrations of airborne asbestos can occur after asbestos-containing materials are disturbed by cutting, sanding or other remodeling activities. Improper attempts to remove these materials can release asbestos fibers into the air in homes, increasing asbestos levels and endangering people living in those homes.

Pesticides

According to a recent survey, 75 percent of U.S. households used at least one pesticide product indoors during the past year. Products used most often are insecticides and disinfectants. Another study suggests that 80 percent of most people's exposure to pesticides occurs indoors and that measurable levels of up to a dozen pesticides have been found in the air inside homes. The amount of pesticides found in homes appears to be greater than can be explained by recent pesticide use in those households; other possible sources include contaminated soil or dust that floats or is tracked in from outside, stored pesticide containers, and household surfaces that collect and then release the pesticides. Pesticides used in and around the home include products to control insects (insecticides), termites (termiticides), rodents (rodenticides), fungi (fungicides), and microbes (disinfectants). They are sold as sprays, liquids, sticks, powders, crystals, balls, and foggers.

In 1990, the American Association of Poison Control Centers reported that some 79,000 children were involved in common household pesticide poisonings or exposures. In households with children under five years old, almost one-half stored at least one pesticide product within reach of children.

EPA registers pesticides for use and requires manufacturers to put information on the label about when and how to use the pesticide. It is important to remember that the "-cide" in pesticides means "to kill". These products can be dangerous if not used properly.

In addition to the active ingredient, pesticides are also made up of ingredients that are used to carry the active agent. These carrier agents are called "inerts" in pesticides because they are not toxic to the targeted pest; nevertheless, some inerts are capable of causing health problems.

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and toxic gas. Because it is impossible to see, taste or smell the toxic fumes, CO can kill you before you are aware it is in your home. At lower levels of exposure, CO causes mild effects that are often mistaken for the flu. These symptoms include headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. The effects of CO exposure can vary greatly from person to person depending on age, overall health and the concentration and length of exposure.

Sources of Carbon Monoxide

Unvented kerosene and gas space heaters; leaking chimneys and furnaces; back-drafting from furnaces, gas water heaters, wood stoves, and fireplaces; gas stoves; generators and other gasoline powered equipment; automobile exhaust from attached garages; and tobacco smoke. Incomplete oxidation during combustion in gas ranges and unvented gas or kerosene heaters may cause high concentrations of CO in indoor air. Worn or poorly adjusted and maintained combustion devices (e.g., boilers, furnaces) can be significant sources, or if the flue is improperly sized, blocked, disconnected, or is leaking. Auto, truck, or bus exhaust from attached garages, nearby roads, or parking areas can also be a source.

Health Effects Associated with Carbon Monoxide

At low concentrations, fatigue in healthy people and chest pain in people with heart disease. At higher concentrations, impaired vision and coordination; headaches; dizziness; confusion; nausea. Can cause flu-like symptoms that clear up after leaving home. Fatal at very high concentrations. Acute effects are due to the formation of carboxyhemoglobin in the blood, which inhibits oxygen intake. At moderate concentrations, angina, impaired vision, and reduced brain function may result. At higher concentrations, CO exposure can be fatal.

Levels in Homes

Average levels in homes without gas stoves vary from 0.5

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to 5 parts per million (ppm). Levels near properly adjusted gas stoves are often 5 to 15 ppm and those near poorly adjusted stoves may be 30 ppm or higher.

Steps to Reduce Exposure to Carbon Monoxide

It is most important to be sure combustion equipment is maintained and properly adjusted. Vehicular use should be carefully managed adjacent to buildings and in vocational programs. Additional ventilation can be used as a temporary measure when high levels of CO are expected for short periods of time.

- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted.
- Consider purchasing a vented space heater when replacing an unvented one.
- Use proper fuel in kerosene space heaters.
- Install and use an exhaust fan vented to outdoors over gas stoves.
- Open flues when fireplaces are in use.
- Choose properly sized wood stoves that are certified to meet EPA emission standards. Make certain that doors on all wood stoves fit tightly.
- Have a trained professional inspect, clean, and tune-up central heating system (furnaces, flues, and chimneys) annually. Repair any leaks promptly.
- Do not idle the car inside garage.

Measurement Methods

Some relatively high-cost infrared radiation adsorption and electrochemical instruments do exist. Moderately priced real-time measuring devices are also available. A passive monitor is currently under development.

Standards or Guidelines

No standards for CO have been agreed upon for indoor air. The U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards for outdoor air are 9 ppm (40,000 micrograms per meter cubed) for 8 hours, and 35 ppm for 1 hour.

For additional information please visit the EPA's web site @ http://www.epa.gov

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News from the US Chamber of Commerce

Submitted by member Bernie Caliendo

Capital Roundup
SMALL BUSINESS TAX BILL INTRODUCED

BILL NAME	SUMMARY OF BILL AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU	U.S. CHAMBER'S POSITION	STATUS
Tax Code Improvements H.R. 6601 Small Business Tax Modernization Act of 2008	This bill would create a standard home office deduction; allow a tax deduction for work cell phones; allow nonresident aliens to be S corporation shareholders; increase the deduction for business meals and entertainment for qualified small businesses; and reduce the recovery period for depreciation of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration (HVACR) equipment.	**The Chamber strongly supports this bill because it would remove onerous and outdated record-keeping requirements and increase small business access to capital.**	**LAST ACTION** Introduced July 24, 2008. **NEXT STEP** Committee Vote
Transportation Funding H.R. 6532	This bill would transfer $8 billion from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund. Without this transfer, the revenue shortfall in the trust fund could lead to more than a 30% reduction in federal highway funds across all states in fiscal year 2009.	**The Chamber supports this bill because it would fund projects already under way and ensure necessary infrastructure maintenance, upgrades, and expansion.**	**LAST ACTION** Passed House July 23, 2008. **NEXT STEP** Senate Vote

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Equal Pay Act Reform H.R. 1338 Paycheck Fairness Act	This bill would, among other things, make unlimited punitive and compensatory damages available for even unintentional violations of the Equal Pay Act, make it easier to bring class actions against employers, and limit an employer's ability to defend legitimate pay disparities.	**The Chamber opposes legislation that would radically expand liability for even unintentional wage differences and make it easier to trap employers in "gotcha" lawsuits.**	**LAST ACTION** Passed House July 31, 2008. **NEXT STEP** Senate Vote
Intellectual Property Rights S. 3325 Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights Act of 2008	This bill would bolster the federal government's ability to protect intellectual property (IP), toughen civil and criminal laws against counterfeiting and piracy, provide enhanced IP enforcement and prosecutorial resources, and improve IP coordination within the executive branch.	**The Chamber supports this legislation because it would send a strong signal to criminals that they cannot profit by stealing intellectual property from entrepreneurs and businesses.**	**LAST ACTION** Introduced July 25, 2008. **NEXT STEP** Committee Vote
Arbitration Clauses H.R. 3010 S. 1782 Arbitration Fairness Act Of 2007	H.R. 3010 and its Senate companion, S. 1782, would eliminate the use of predispute arbitration clauses in future consumer, employment, and franchise contracts, and they would nullify predispute arbitration clauses in existing contracts if a contract dispute arises after enactment of the legislation.	**The Chamber opposes these bills because they would severely damage an alternative dispute resolution system that consumers and businesses have relied on for decades, disrupt current commercial arbitration practices, and increase litigation.**	**LAST ACTION** Passed House subcommittee July 15, 2008. **NEXT STEP** Committee Vote

Articles published in the CAHI Reporter are the sole opinion of the author.
CAHI does not endorse or state a position for or against the content of said articles.

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The Licensing Board meetings are held at 9:30 am, Department of Consumer Protection, Room 117, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford.

The public is always welcome.