

## **RADON MANAGEMENT**

*This Policy Standard states the requirements placed on the University and its Colleges and Directorates with regards to the identification, assessment, management and monitoring of radon; a naturally occurring radioactive gas which can be present in the workplace.*

***The Policy Standard applies to:***

- *The University and its Colleges and Directorates.*
- *Staff, students, contractors and visitors.*
- *Naturally occurring radon gas.*

Approved by Health & Safety Committee:	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2010
Date of Implementation:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010

## **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of Bangor University, so far as is reasonably practicable, but in accordance with the relevant legislation, statutory requirements and good practice, to ensure the health and safety of staff, students and visitors to the University.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to assess the risks from radon exposure to their employees. Where premises are underground or in radon affected areas then indicative measurements of radon gas concentrations are required. If radon concentrations exceed action levels then the Ionising Radiation Regulations require employers to take measures to ensure the health and safety of employees working in the areas by reducing their exposure to radon.

## **3. BACKGROUND & GENERAL INFORMATION**

Radon is a colourless, odourless radioactive gas which originates from uranium that occurs naturally in many rocks and soils. Granite contains relatively high levels of uranium and areas of the UK, such as the South West of England, have very high radon concentrations.

Most radon gas breathed in is immediately exhaled and presents little hazard. However, decay products of radon behave more like solid materials and attach themselves to atmospheric dust and water droplets which are then breathed in, becoming lodged in the lungs and airways. Some of these decay products emit a particularly hazardous type of radiation known as alpha particles which can cause significant damage to cells in the lung.

Radon gas can seep out of the ground and build up in houses and in-door workplaces. The highest radon concentrations are usually found in underground spaces such as basements, caves and mines but high concentrations can also be found in the ground floor of buildings.

As some areas of Wales are affected by radon and some University buildings contain work areas that are either wholly or partially below ground, the University has a responsibility to identify radon affected areas, assess the risk and implement controls as necessary to ensure the health and safety of its staff, students and visitors.

## **4. UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS**

The University shall provide adequate resources to ensure radon affected areas are identified, risk assessed and managed in accordance with the requirements of the Ionising Radiation Regulations. In addition, where shared occupancy of a University owned building takes place, the University shall communicate findings of all Radon Surveys as appropriate.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITY OF RADIATION PROTECTION OFFICER / RADIATION PROTECTION SUPERVISOR**

The Radiation Protection Officer and the Radiation Protection Supervisor shall:

- a) Following guidance from the Radiation Protection Adviser conduct radon surveys to identify University radon affected areas.
- b) Following the results of the radon surveys shall assess the risk and make recommendations as appropriate.
- c) Provide advice and guidance to Property and Campus Services (PACS), Colleges and Directorates with regards to the findings of radon surveys and the actions required.
- d) Provide advice and guidance to the Radiation Health and Safety Sub-Committee and University Health and Safety Committee, as appropriate.

- e) As necessary, liaise with the Health Protection Agency, Health and Safety Executive and Radiation Protection Advisor on radon issues.

## **6. PROPERTY AND CAMPUS SERVICES REQUIREMENTS**

Property and Campus Services are required to:

- a) Undertake structural / physical works in accordance with recommendations made by the Radiation Protection Officer / Radiation Protection Supervisor.
- b) Ensure defects which are notified with regards to equipment / structural elements put in place to control radon in the workplace are dealt with promptly.
- c) Ensure radon protection is installed for all new developments as is required.
- d) Consult with the Radiation Protection Officer / Radiation Protection Supervisor on all ground floor changes of use or major alterations.

## **7. COLLEGE / DIRECTORATE REQUIREMENTS**

Each College and Directorate is required to:

- a) Implement management controls for radon affected areas within their area of responsibility as recommended by the Radiation Protection Officer / Radiation Protection Supervisor. For example, restricted access, monitoring of hours spent in the area.
- b) Ensure all staff, students, visitors and contractors are aware of and understand these management controls.
- c) Undertake checks to ensure the management controls have been implemented and are followed.
- d) Implement systems to ensure defects with equipment / structural elements put in place to control radon in the workplace are reported immediately to PACS.
- e) Notify the Radiation Protection Officer / Radiation Protection Supervisor of proposed change of use for basement and ground floor areas.

## **8. STAFF AND STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES**

As with those duties placed upon the University and its Colleges / Directorates, staff and students also have responsibilities in law. With regards to this Policy Standard, staff and students must:

- a. Follow all management controls implemented by their College / Directorate.
- b. Not interfere with or mis-use equipment provided to control radon in the workplace.
- c. Immediately report defects with regards to equipment / structural elements that have been put in place to control radon in the workplace.

## **9. REVIEW AND AUDIT PROCEDURES**

Health and Safety Services will carry out general and periodic audits to ensure compliance against this Policy Standard and legislation in general.

Colleges / Directorates must periodically review their own procedures to ensure the requirements of this Policy Standard are implemented, suitable and effective.

In addition, the University's Health and Safety Committee and the Radiation Health and Safety Sub-Committee may from time to time review the effectiveness of the University's system for the management of radon in the workplace. **End.**