

ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMMENT FORM FOR PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

(This form must be submitted electronically)

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Proposed Code Change - Language

~~**PASSIVE DEPRESSURIZATION SYSTEM.** “Passive depressurization system” means a system designed to achieve lower air pressure below the soil gas membrane relative to the indoor air pressure by use of a vent pipe that is routed through the building, connecting the air below the soil gas membrane with the outdoor air, thereby relying on stack effect to provide an upward flow of air upward in the vent pipe to draw air from beneath the soil gas membrane.~~

Proposed Code Change – Need and Reason

This change is needed to reduce Minnesotan’s exposure to radon gas, the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. It is also needed to eliminate confusion among builders and local code officials around requirements for passive versus active radon systems.

This change is reasonable because radon is detected in nearly all Minnesota homes, at an average level that exceeds the action level of 4 picoCuries per liter established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The risk of lung cancer for nonsmokers at the average radon level found in Minnesota homes is over 7 in 1,000, meaning for every 1,000 homeowners exposed at the average level over a lifetime seven will die of lung cancer. The risk is nearly ten times higher for smokers. There is no safe level of exposure to radon, a Class A human carcinogen as defined by EPA and other organizations.

It is reasonable to take action to reduce radon levels in new homes to the lowest extent practical prior to occupation, as most new homeowners do not test their home for radon and testing is not required under the current code. This approach is similar to code requirements for smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, and other similar safeguards designed to protect residents from events that occur with much less frequency than the risk of radon-related lung cancer. It also represents a primary prevention approach to dealing with the human health impact and associated costs to society of the current burden of radon related lung cancer.

Proposed Code Change – Cost/Benefit Analysis

This change should have a minimal effect on the cost of construction, typically less than \$200. This is much less than the typical cost of installing the fan in an existing home, in both labor and materials cost.

Other Factors to Consider Related to Proposed Code Change

1. Is this proposed code change meant to:

change language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).

change language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).

delete language contained in a published code book? If so, list section(s).

delete language contained in an existing amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, list Rule part(s).

neither; this language will be new language, not found in the code book or in Minnesota Rule.

2. Is this proposed code change required by a Minnesota Statute or new legislation? If so, please provide the citation to the Statute or legislation.
No.

3. Will this proposed code change impact other sections of a published code book or of an amendment in Minnesota Rule? If so, please list the affected sections or rule parts.
No.

4. Will this proposed code change impact other parts of the Minnesota State Building Code? If so, please list the affected parts of the Minnesota State Building Code.
No.

5. Who are the parties affected or segments of industry affected by this proposed code change?
Residential contractors and their subcontractors, building code officials and homeowners

6. Can you think of other means or methods to achieve the purpose of the proposed code change? If so, please explain what they are and why your proposed change is the preferred method or means to achieve the desired result.
No.

7. Are you aware of any federal requirement or regulation related to this proposed code change? If so, please list the regulation or requirement.
No.