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DHS invites students to enter National Radon Poster Contest

Oregon students ages 9 to 14 are invited to compete in the 2009 National Radon Poster Contest.

Oregon's first-place winner will receive a \$250 gift card to The Discovery Store. The second-place winner will receive a \$100 gift card, and the third-place winner a \$50 gift card to The Discovery Store. As an incentive to teachers and educators, a \$100 gift card to Acorn Naturalists for classroom supplies will be awarded to the teacher of the artist who creates the winning poster. Money for the prizes is provided by the National Safety Council.

In addition to the gift cards, the top three Oregon posters will be sent on to the National Radon Poster Contest. The winner of the national contest will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. to participate in an awards ceremony along with a parent and a teacher.

"The goal is to raise awareness about radon gas and to encourage people to test their homes," said Brett Sherry, radon coordinator in the Oregon Department of Human Services State Public Health Division. "Radon gas is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S., and is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. Students who are educated on radon gas are more likely to pass that information along to their parents and urge them to test their homes."

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that you can't see, taste, or smell. It is produced by the natural decay of uranium in soil, rock, and water. Radon comes up through the soil and enters a home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Once inside, radon levels can build up to unhealthy levels.

Posters must be received by Oct. 15, 2008. Full contest details and entry forms are available on the Radon Program Web site at www.healthoregon.org/rps/radon or at the National Safety Council's Web site, www.nsc.org/resources/issues/radon/radon_poster.aspx or by contacting Brett Sherry, 971-673-0442 or brett.w.sherry@state.or.us

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