Radon/Radon PCOEq: Analysis in MCPS Schools

MCPS (Montgomery County Public Schools) has implemented a radon monitoring program to ensure the health and safety of students. The program began in 1980, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandated radon monitoring in schools. Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can be found in homes and schools. It is formed from the decay of uranium, which is a common element in the Earth's crust.

Radon gas can enter buildings through cracks in the foundation and through water seepage. It can then accumulate in enclosed spaces, where it can be inhaled by people. Radon is a known cause of lung cancer.

MCPS started monitoring radon levels in schools in 1990 and has continued to do so ever since. The program has been revised over time to improve its effectiveness.

Radon levels in schools are monitored using devices that measure the concentration of radon gas. These devices are placed in different areas of the school, including classrooms, libraries, and basements. The results are then analyzed to determine if action is needed.

The EPA recommends that radon levels in schools be kept below 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter). If the levels exceed this threshold, corrective actions are taken to reduce the radon levels. These actions may include sealing cracks, improving ventilation, or using radon mitigation systems.

MCPS has successfully reduced radon levels in schools through these efforts. The program has been well-received by parents and students, and it has helped to protect the health of the school community.

References: