



# Pembina County Public Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Pembina County Public Health Goes on the Road with Radon

*January is Radon Awareness Month*

Radon is the number two cause of lung cancer in the United States. It is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas. It forms naturally from the decay (breaking down) of radioactive elements, such as uranium, which are found in soil and rock throughout the world. It is estimated to cause over 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year in the U.S, and 1 out of 15 homes have dangerously high radon levels.

Pembina County 2012 to 2018 data provided by Alpha Energy Labs shows 66 homes were tested for radon. Of those, 55 or 83% are at or above the "Action Level" of 4.0 picocuries per liter (pCi/L).<sup>2</sup>

***Testing your home is the only way to find out if you have a radon problem.***

**Good News!** Pembina County Public Health has free radon kits available for you to test your home! The laboratory fees and postage are included with the kit. Test results are sent directly to the contact. Kits can be picked up at Public Health or obtained at community presentations during the following dates:

- ⇒ December 14 11am - 1pm Drayton Hastings Landing
- ⇒ December 20 11am - 1pm Mountain Community Center
- ⇒ December 21 11am - 1pm Crystal Roadside 66
- ⇒ December 28 11am - 1pm Nече Northdale Oil
- ⇒ January 7 11am - 1pm St. Thomas Café
- ⇒ January 8 5pm - 8pm Pembina School
- ⇒ January 9 11am - 1pm Walhalla Senior Center

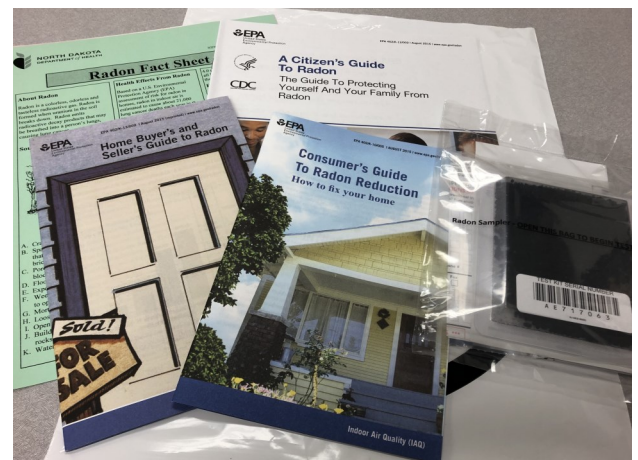


Photo on left: Javin Bedard, Grand Forks Public Health Department, explains a radon reduction system during the Radon Education event at the Cavalier School on 11/28/2018  
 Photo on right: Radon test kit with educational materials

# Juul: The Latest Vaping Device Hooking Youth on Nicotine

There is a dramatic shift happening across America right now, e-cigarettes have quietly eclipsed cigarette smoking among adolescents. The possibility of another generation getting hooked on nicotine is a nightmare scenario health officials are scrambling to avoid. The Juul, which is an e-cigarette that resembles a USB flash drive and can fit in the palm of your hand, is one of the major culprits leading to this nightmare. The Juul device has been on the market since 2015 and has seen staggering numbers related to its popularity. In 2017, the e-cigarette market expanded by 40 percent, with a lot of that growth driven by Juul.

Why Juul? According to many adolescents and young adults, Juul is everything that old e-cigarettes were not. It is very lightweight and portable, easy to use, comes in over 15,000 flavors like Crème Brulee and Cool Cucumber, and can deliver as much nicotine as up to two packs of cigarettes. As regulators and health professionals scramble over what to do about Juul, one thing has become clear, many teens don't seem to understand the potential harms of these devices.

It is not only difficult to spot these devices as they are very discrete and disguised as a piece of technology, but it is also nearly impossible to limit access to purchasing them. As seen in the photo below, when purchasing these devices



online, all that is needed is a simple click of your age verification. The starter pack can be purchased for about \$35 and shipped right to your house.



Overall, e-cigarettes have a nicotine content that is much more concentrated than traditional cigarettes. They are discreet, lightweight and portable, making them virtually able to be used anywhere without drawing too much attention. And, worst of all, sales of Juul are skyrocketing and health officials are unsure of the long term effects.

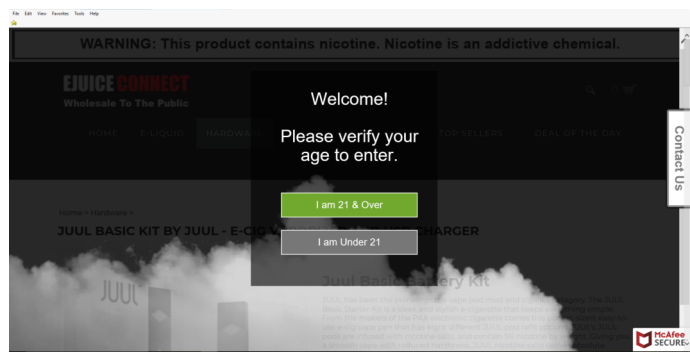
## So, what can we do about this?

- Hold Juul, and all e-cigarette manufacturers, accountable for their marketing tactics and require disclosure of the ingredients in their products.
- Advocate for stricter regulations on the sale of e-cigarettes (ex: stop selling flavors that appeal to kids, increase tax on these products, and limit the areas where these items can be sold).
- Educate yourself and your family about the dangers of these non-traditional, yet often times more harmful devices.
- Contact your local public health unit for more information and to join the Pembina County Tobacco Coalition to stay informed.

Source: "Juul, the vape device teens are getting hooked on, explained", Julia Belluz, <https://www.wox.com/science-and-health/2018/5/1/17286638/juul-vaping-e-cigarette>

Photos above: sleek Juul packaging and the Juul device charging via USB port on a laptop

Right: screen shot of the one-click age verification to purchase a Juul device online



## Point of Distribution (POD) Exercise Practiced in November

Pembina County Public Health teamed up with local and regional partners to practice a point of distribution exercise (POD) at the Cavalier Public School. The purpose of these events is to utilize our local resources and set up a scenario just as it would be done in the event of a real emergency. Public Health relies on local community volunteers whenever a POD is activated.

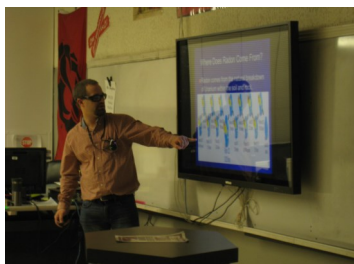
This year, the POD was practiced using radon test kits. People from the community were invited to arrive at two different times to take in an educational session about radon and then walk through the POD setup to obtain their radon test kit. There was also regional contractors on site for questions about reduction systems, as well as a station to sign up for Pembina County Emergency Alerts and ND Public Health Emergency Volunteer Reserve. A total of 43 radon kits were distributed through the event. It is the goal of Pembina County Public Health to review this process every two years. Please contact the public health office at 265-4248 if you are interested in becoming a vol-



The Incident Command Post volunteers registered the participants.



Rachel and Denise educate and distribute radon kits to the participants.



Justin Otto, radon expert in the Air Quality Division at the ND Department of Health, presents to the groups.



Regional preparedness leaders from Grand Forks Public Health help to guide the flow of the exercise.

# SIX DOMAINS OF PREPAREDNESS

The **Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program** works to advance six main areas of preparedness so state and local public health systems are better prepared for emergencies that impact the public's health.



### Community Resilience:

Preparing for and recovering from emergencies



### Incident management:

Coordinating an effective response



### Information Management:

Making sure people have information to take action



### Countermeasures and Mitigation:

Getting medicines and supplies where they are needed



### Surge Management:

Expanding medical services to handle large events



### Biosurveillance:

Investigating and identifying health threats



# Pembina County Public Health



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
Pembina County Public Health

301 Dakota Street W #2  
Cavalier, ND 58220  
Phone: (701) 265-4248  
Fax: (701) 265-5193

Sign up for Pembina County Alerts by calling Emergency Management at 265-4849 or online at [tinyurl.com/pembinaalerts](http://tinyurl.com/pembinaalerts)

Be informed about inclement weather in your area!

## Your Public Health Staff

Jeanna Kujava, RN,  
Public Health Director  
[jkujava@nd.gov](mailto:jkujava@nd.gov)

Kallie Christenson, RN  
[kcchristenson@nd.gov](mailto:kcchristenson@nd.gov)

Rachel Ramsay, RN  
[r Ramsay@nd.gov](mailto:r Ramsay@nd.gov)

Deb Stark, RN  
[dstark@nd.gov](mailto:dstark@nd.gov)

Denise Dame, Admin Assistant  
[ddame@nd.gov](mailto:ddame@nd.gov)

We're on the Web!

[pembinacountynd.gov/publichealth](http://pembinacountynd.gov/publichealth)

If you would like to receive this newsletter or join the tobacco coalition, please contact us by phone or email.

## Pembina County Resources Spotlight

### Palliative Care vs Hospice

Palliative Care	Hospice
For all seriously ill patients, regardless of prognosis	Six month prognosis required by Medicare and other funders
Patients can receive curative care at same time	Coverage includes outpatient medications and supplies, but treatments to cure or prolong life are not covered
Palliative care team works with a variety of healthcare providers to prevent service fragmentation	Hospice team coordinates and oversees the plan of care
New, evolving, resulting in different features among palliative programs	The Medicare Benefit Conditions of Participation provides some consistency in program contents

The Pembina County Palliative Care Team is hoping to raise awareness and be part of an exciting opportunity to bring palliative care to our communities!