

## **OTHER VOICES — ORGANIZATIONS WITH A SHARE OF THE RADON MISSION**

Harry E. Rector  
Willkes Technologies, Inc.  
Rockville, MD

### **ABSTRACT**

AARST has opened lines of communication to a number of organizations that are natural confederates in facing the radon problem. The American Lung Association, for example, continues to be a valued ally for information campaigns in the national and local arenas. Similarly, AARST has been working actively with the Health Physics Society and, as witnessed by this symposium, the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors. Other technical organizations present the means to fit radon into the bigger picture while seeing to it that our square is properly filled in. At the same time, a whole philanthropic economy exists for the sole purpose of accomplishing social and technical goals that match well with what AARST does.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Radon has been at the forefront of indoor air quality concerns for a long time. Studies of environmental radon date from the era of the First World War. Serious studies of indoor radon began just over twenty years ago in response to concerns over radium contamination. By the early 1980s, however, "background" measurements conducted in presumably uncontaminated structures soon refocused attention to the general building stock. Since that time, radon has been discovered (and mitigated) in a full variety of buildings in virtually every part of the world.

While it is tempting to view radon in isolation, AARST concerns constitute only one aspect of a rather complex building systems problem. The building systems context generates a universe of hundreds of chemicals and processes. Energy conservation, for example, predates indoor radon by a few years and has progressed past similar barriers of flawed conventional wisdom. Currently, the hundreds of organic compounds emanating from consumer products and materials in routine use are just beginning to be properly recognized. A relatively strong complement of technical societies exists to help pull disparate perspectives together.

Similarly, a mature grant economy remains to be exploited. Novel funding sources geared to solving environmental, educational, and public information problems dovetail nicely with the AARST mission.

## TECHNICAL SOCIETIES

A number of technical societies exist to help knit together the allied fields related to indoor radon. Leading examples are summarized in Table 1.

ASTM (the American Society for Testing and Materials) has grown over the last century into one of the largest voluntary standards development systems in the world. ASTM provides a forum for the full community of concern to meet on common ground and write standards for materials, products, systems, and services. The consensus framework brings together producers, users, ultimate consumers, and those having a general interest (representatives of government and academia) to concentrate all aspects of experience in developing standard test methods, specifications, practices, guides, classifications, and terminology. ASTM's standards development activities encompass metals, paints, plastics, textiles, petroleum, construction, energy, environment, consumer products, medical services and devices, computerized systems, electronics, and many other areas. Two areas of special interest to AARST members include Committee D-22 on Sampling and Analysis of Atmospheres (which has responsibility for radon test methods), and E-6 on Building Constructions (which has responsibility for mitigation standards). Of interest to AARST members is *Radon Control Options for the Design and Construction of New Low-Rise Residential Buildings* (ASTM Standard Guide E1465-92), which evolved from the original EPA standard.

The American Society for Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) is organized for research, standards development, continuing education and publications relating to heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. Within the indoor air and radon community, ASHRAE is best known for the consensus standard, *Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality* (ANSI/ASHRAE 62-1989), which specifies minimum ventilation rates and indoor air quality that will be acceptable to human occupants while minimizing the potential for adverse health effects. As part of the current review cycle, this standard is being split into two separate proposed standards to address the differences between low-rise residential buildings (which are ordinarily ventilated through natural air leakage) and larger buildings (which may be ventilated using mechanical systems). In addition to journals and symposium proceedings, ASHRAE publishes an excellent handbook series covering fundamentals, equipment, and systems. ASHRAE symposia began featuring indoor radon in the early 1980s.

The International Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate (ISIAQ), founded in 1992, is a multidisciplinary organization that unites scientists involved in indoor environment design, construction, operation and maintenance, air quality measurement and the health sciences. ISIAQ publishes *Indoor Air*, the only journal exclusively devoted to indoor environment research. The society also organizes meetings, conferences, and seminars on indoor air quality and climate. ISIAQ task forces are developing guideline documents on topics ranging from moisture control general principles for indoor air investigations to ventilation and indoor air quality in hospitals.

The Air & Waste Management Association (A&WMA), founded in 1907, brings together environmental specialists in the physical and social sciences, health and medicine, engineering and

law. A&WMA also attracts decision makers from agencies, industry, business, and the academic and research communities. Along with a news magazine, the Association publishes a peer-reviewed journal and each year convenes the largest environmental conference in North America. A&WMA convened one of the first specialty conferences on indoor radon in the mid 1980s.

The American Society for Quality (ASQ) sponsors a series of specialty conferences and training programs, and is an ANSI-accredited consensus standards writing body. ASQ's divisions and interest groups serve the needs of members involved with specific industries and applications. These groups range from automotive manufacturing to environmental sciences.

The Health Physics Society, formed in 1956, is a scientific organization concerned with the protection of people and the environment from radiation. The Society has more than 6,400 members representing all scientific and technical areas related to radiation protection drawn from academia, government, medical institutions, research laboratories and industry. The Society publishes a respected journal, and was among the first organizations to get involved with indoor radon.

## **FOUNDATIONS AND GRANTS**

A mature economy of foundations and grants has emerged over the years to support the "good deeds" that society needs from time to time. Grant-making institutions are broadly categorized as either private (endowed from an individual or family fortune to accomplish topical goals) or corporate (supported from business profits to accomplish goals in areas related to market). Table 2 summarizes a few examples of private and corporate foundations supporting initiatives that are compatible with the AARST mission.

Opportunities range from modest grants of a few thousand dollars to significant program-grade support. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation (yes, the ice cream people), for example, tends to write modest grants up to \$10,000. The group from the Pew Charitable Trusts, on the other hand, works from an asset base of \$4.5 billion and provided grants to 320 nonprofit organizations in 1997 totaling \$181 million.

None of these institutions has specifically earmarked funds for radon. The recurring themes of education, public health, and public awareness, however, give ample room to develop programs around the compelling issues of radon. Grant-making institutions are of particular value to AARST chapters. Local grants sought in league with sympathetic organizations could provide that special satisfaction that comes from developing positive grassroots.

The examples listed here are truly the tip of the metaphorical iceberg. Like any other field, consultants and experts stand ready to help grant-makers and grantees organize things. Rather expensive training on proposal writing and grantsmanship is available, and professional services wait in the wings. In contrast, outfits like the Foundation Center serve as natural points of organization.

Table 1. Examples of Technical Societies With A Stake In Radon

Organization	Highlights
<p>ASTM 100 Barr Harbor Drive West Conshohocken, PA Phone: (610) 832-9500 www.astm.org</p>	<p>The American Society for Testing and Materials is responsible for over 10,000 consensus standards. Maintains committees on indoor air quality (including radon), and building performance. Leader for indoor air quality and radon interests since early 1980s.</p>
<p>ISIAQ Via Magenta 25 20020 Busto Garolfo (Milan) Italy 39-331-568-587 www.isiaq.org</p>	<p>International Society for Indoor Air Quality and Climate, formed in 1992, publishes the only peer-reviewed journal exclusively devoted to indoor air quality, stages a triennial symposium, and is developing standardized protocols.</p>
<p>ASHRAE 1791 Tullie Circle, N.E. Atlanta, GA 30329 (404) 636-8400 www.ashrae.org</p>	<p>The American Society for Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers develops standards and accepted practices for the HVAC&amp;R industry worldwide. Sponsors research programs, stages major symposia and meetings, publishes journals and handbooks. Leader for indoor air quality and radon since early 1980s.</p>
<p>A&amp;WMA One Gateway Center, Third Floor Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Phone (412) 232-3444 www.awma.org</p>	<p>The Air &amp; Waste Management Association has more than 14,000 members in 65 countries representing technical, management, health, and educational issues of the environment. Publishes peer-reviewed journal, and convenes major conferences and workshops. Leader for indoor air quality and radon since early 1980s.</p>
<p>AGU 2000 Florida Avenue N.W. Washington, DC 20009-1277 USA (202)-462-6900 www.agu.org</p>	<p>The American Geophysical Union provides cooperative links among scientific organizations involved in geophysics and related disciplines. Publishes a number of important journals and convenes major technical conferences. Indoor radon interests since mid 1980s.</p>
<p>ASQ 611 E Wisconsin Ave Milwaukee, WI 53202 (414) 272-8575 www.asq.org</p>	<p>The American Society for Quality develops quality assurance standards, sponsors conferences and symposia, publishes a series of journals and newsletters, and conducts training programs.</p>
<p>Health Physics Society 1313 Dolley Madison Boulevard, Suite 402, McLean, VA 22101 (703) 790-1745 www.hps.org</p>	<p>Leading professional organization for radiation protection. Publishes the professional journal <i>Health Physics</i>, and stages major conferences and training programs. Leader for indoor radon since the early 1980s.</p>

Table 2. Examples of Foundations and Other Grant-making Institutions

Organization	Mission Highlights
<p>Bell Atlantic Foundation                      1095 Avenue of the Americas                      Room 3200                      New York, NY 10036                      800-360-7955  <a href="http://www.bellatlanticfoundation.com">www.bellatlanticfoundation.com</a></p>	<p>Priority given to activities that facilitate collaborations through network solutions and enhanced communications systems in program areas of Education, Health and Human Services, Arts &amp; Humanities, and Communities.</p>
<p>Ben &amp; Jerry's Foundation                      30 Community Drive                      S. Burlington, VT 05403-6828                      800-651-9600  <a href="http://www.benjerry.com">www.benjerry.com</a></p>	<p>Will consider proposals that address issues affecting children and families, disenfranchised groups, and the environment.</p>
<p>The Heinz Endowments                      30 CNG Tower                      625 Liberty Avenue                      Pittsburgh PA 15222                      412-338-2627  <a href="http://www.heinz.org">www.heinz.org</a></p>	<p>Support the efforts of non-profit organizations active in the areas of Arts &amp; Culture; Children, Youth &amp; Families; Economic Opportunity; Education; and Environment, with an emphasis on programs either in southwestern Pennsylvania or of clear benefit to the region.</p>
<p>W. Alton Jones Foundation, Inc.                      232 East High Street                      Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-5178                      804-295-2134  <a href="http://www.wajones.org">http://www.wajones.org</a></p>	<p>Eliminate Systemic Contamination in three areas affecting the health of children: Pesticides and endocrine disrupters, Air pollution, and Lead poisoning.</p>
<p>The George Lucas Educational Foundation                      P.O. Box 3494                      San Rafael, CA 94912                      415-662-1600  <a href="http://www.glef.org">http://www.glef.org</a></p>	<p>Promote and support changes to the K-12 educational system; share the latest strategies for improving schools, especially those that integrate technology with teaching and learning; connect people to information and each other to share ideas and resources.</p>
<p>The David and Lucile Packard Foundation                      300 Second Street, Suite 200                      Los Altos, CA 94022                      650-948-7658  <a href="http://www.packfound.org">http://www.packfound.org</a></p>	<p>Broad program areas of Science, Children, Population, Conservation, Arts, Film Preservation, Community and Special Areas that include Organizational Effectiveness and Philanthropy.</p>
<p>The Pew Charitable Trusts                      2005 Market Street, Suite 1700                      Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077                      215- 575-9050  <a href="http://www.pewtrusts.com">http://www.pewtrusts.com</a></p>	<p>Promoting economic and regulatory incentives that encourage innovative approaches to pollution prevention. Increasing public understanding of the public health impacts of environmental policies.</p>
<p>Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation                      101 Reynolda Village                      Winston-Salem, NC 27106                      800-443-8319  <a href="http://www.zsf.org">www.zsf.org</a></p>	<p>Special attention to focus areas of community economic development, the environment, pre-collegiate education, issues affecting minorities, and issues affecting women.</p>
<p>Foundation Center                      79 Fifth Avenue                      New York, NY 10003-3076                      212-620-4230  <a href="http://www.fdncenter.org">www.fdncenter.org</a></p>	<p>The Foundation Center is an independent nonprofit information clearinghouse established in 1956 to foster public understanding of the foundation field by collecting, organizing, analyzing, and disseminating information on foundations, corporate giving, and related subjects.</p>