

Behavioural Study 2020

National Radon Program



YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY... OUR PRIORITY.

Behavioural Research is conducted to help assess impacts of the National Radon Program outreach efforts.

2019 Behavioural Intervention and Trial Project

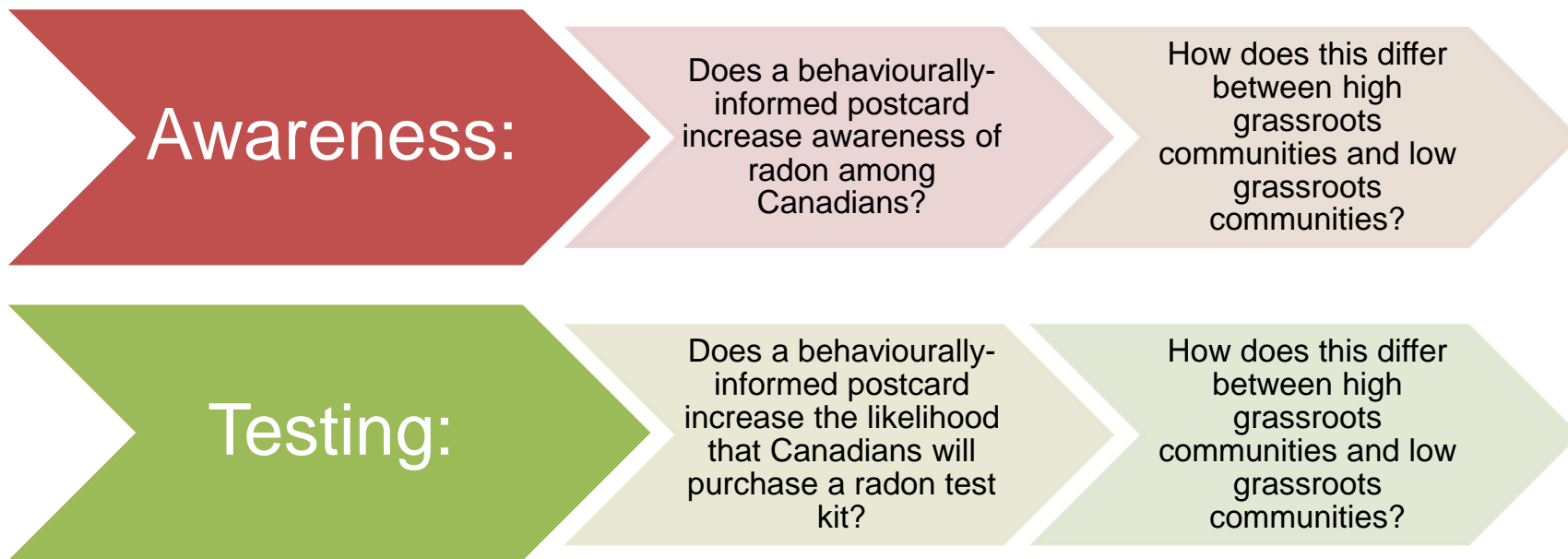
- In 2019, the National Radon Program (NRP) worked with the Privy Council Office, Impact & Innovation Unit and Deloitte Canada to preform a Behaviour Intervention and Trial Project.

Results

- This project found that behaviourally informed radon outreach postcards did increase the number of test kits purchased, but only slightly

The goal of the 2020 behavioural study was to look at whether a higher radon awareness led to increased likelihood of testing.

The experiment asked two research questions:



Grassroots Efforts

- Efforts originating at a local, community level, led either by the municipality, local health authority, community member(s) and/or local businesses.

High Grassroots Efforts

- Communities with high grassroots efforts typically have high radon awareness, activities and buy-in from members of the community.


Low Grassroots Efforts

- Communities with low grassroots efforts are defined as little to no efforts or awareness in the community and/or engagement by the local government regarding radon.

A postcard was developed and sent to ~1.5 million Canadians in January 2020. The number of test kits purchased were measured over the following 8 weeks.

RADON
GAS IS IN YOUR HOME


Radon is the #1 cause of lung cancer in non-smokers.
TEST to find out if you have a dangerous level.

1 ORDER 
Order a long-term radon test from www.takeactiononradon.ca

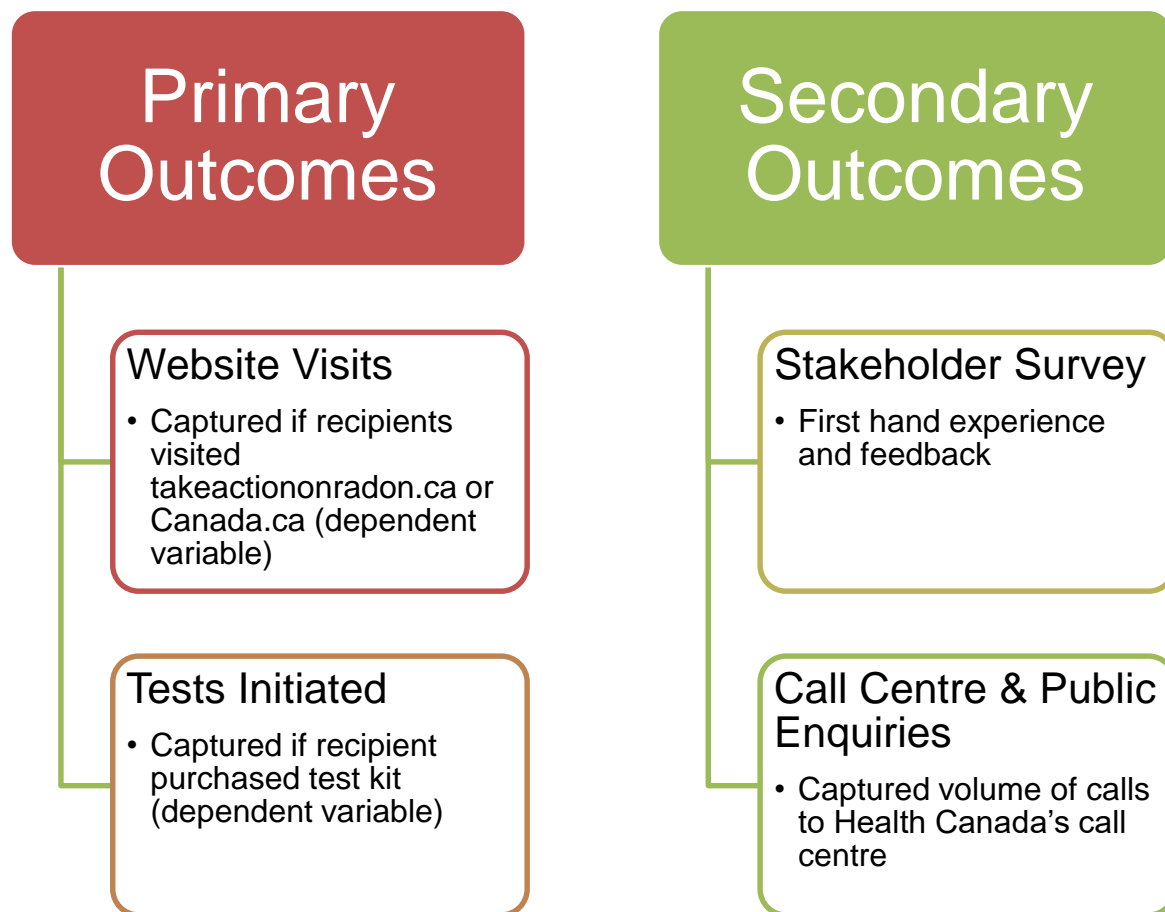
2 TEST 
Follow the instructions provided to properly place the test kit in your home.
After 3 months send your radon test kit to the lab to be analysed using the return packaging and instructions provided.
You will receive your result within a few weeks.

3 TAKE ACTION 
If your radon levels are below 200* no action is required.
For radon levels above 200*, take action to reduce.
Call **1-866-225-0709** or visit Canada.ca/radon.

* Radon is measured in becquerels per metre³ (Bq/m³)

 Health Canada Santé Canada 

Two primary outcomes and two secondary outcomes were evaluated.



The sample was made up of a cross-section of communities from across Canada.

Municipalities in Sample				
Region	Treatment		Control	
	<i>High Grassroots</i>	<i>Low Grassroots</i>	<i>High Grassroots</i>	<i>Low Grassroots</i>
Atlantic	Halifax, NS	Stephenville, NL	Charlottetown, PEI	St. Stephen, NB
Quebec	Maniwaki, QC	Lennoxville, QC	Chelsea, QC	Saint Bruno, QC
Ontario	Kingston, ON	Seaforth, ON	Hamilton, ON	Timmins, ON
Prairies	Morden, MB	Wayburn, SK	Okotoks, AB	Lethbridge, AB
British Columbia	Castlegar, BC	Greenwood, BC	Abbotsford, BC	Delta, BC

- Treatment: municipalities that received the postcard.
- Control: Municipalities that did not receive the postcard.

Data Collection

- Data was collected and identified by FSA from 16 test kit providers across the country.
- Treatment and Control municipalities were chosen based on recommendation by Health Canada's Regional Radiation Specialists.
- Primary factor was the level of grassroots efforts.
- Population size varies widely within all treatment and control groups.
- The percentage of test kits sold in each municipality was determined using the number of households in each FSA (data provided by Canada Post).



Health Canada conducted this study to determine the effectiveness of a behaviourally informed postcard intervention on awareness and testing, in areas with high grassroots efforts compared to low grassroots efforts.

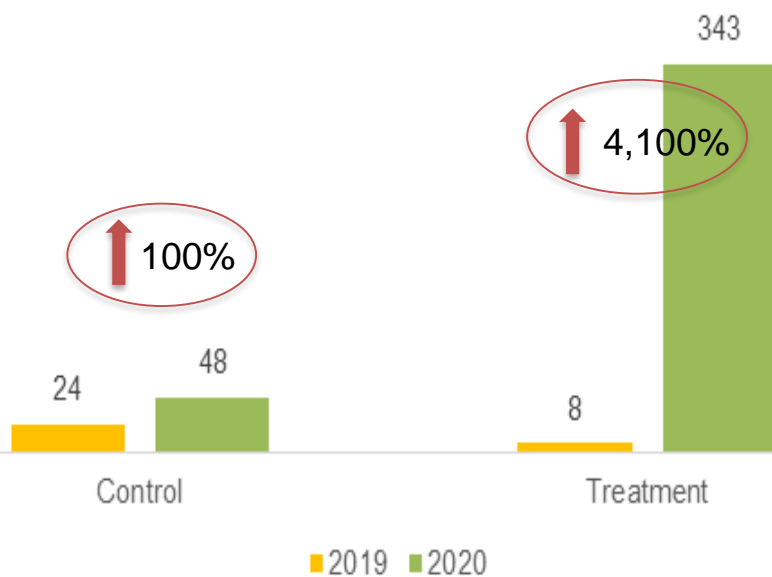
To determine the impact on radon awareness, two questions were asked:

1 Does a behaviourally informed postcard increase awareness of radon among Canadians?

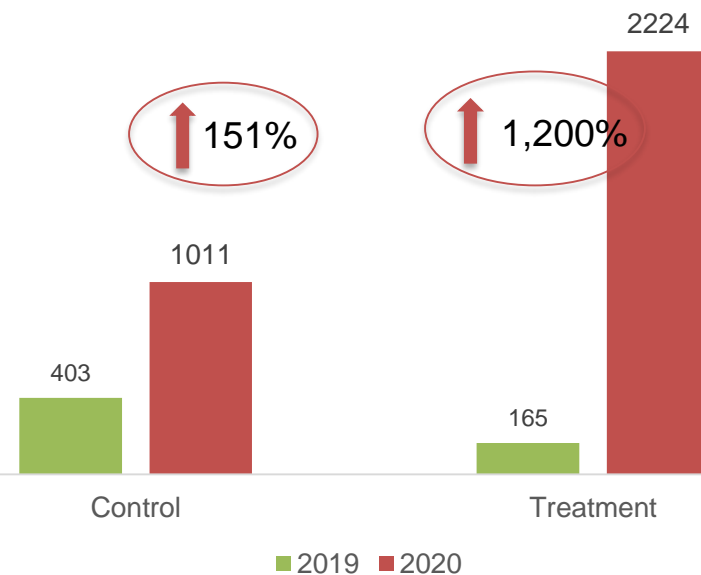
2 What is the difference in impact between high grassroots communities and low grassroots communities?

To answer the first research question, Health Canada looked at website visits to Canada.ca and to TakeActionOnRadon.ca.

Canada.ca

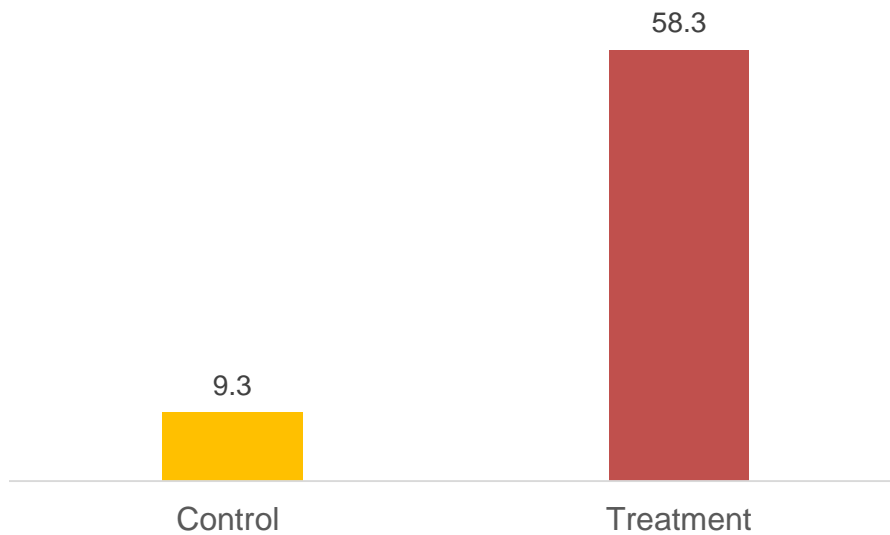


TakeActiononRadon.ca

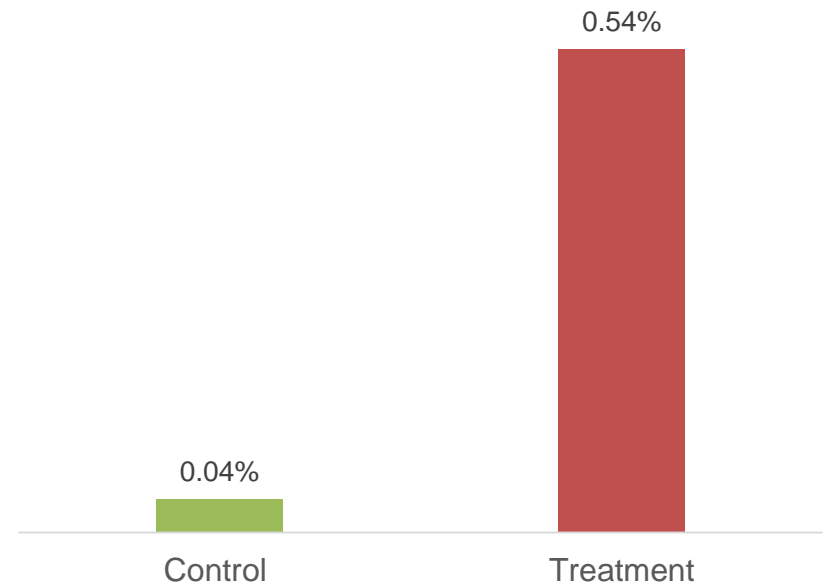


Health Canada also looked at test kits purchased between the control and treatment groups.

Average Number of Test Kits Purchased

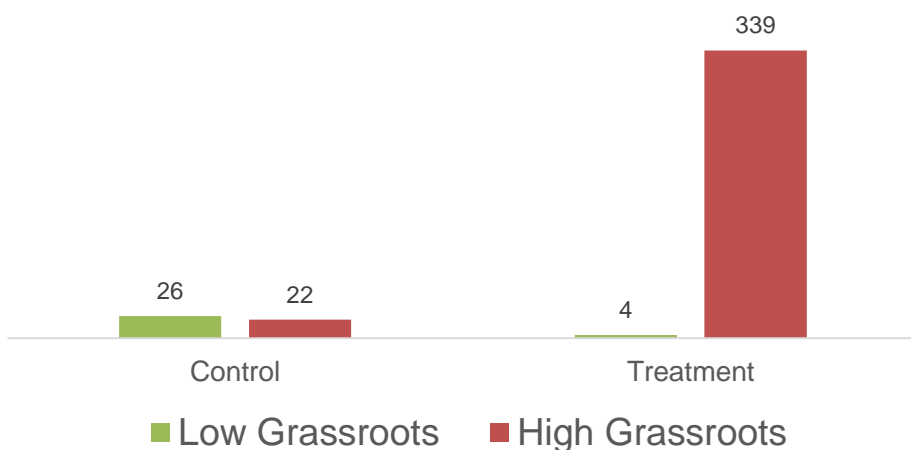


Percentage of Radon Test Kits Purchased

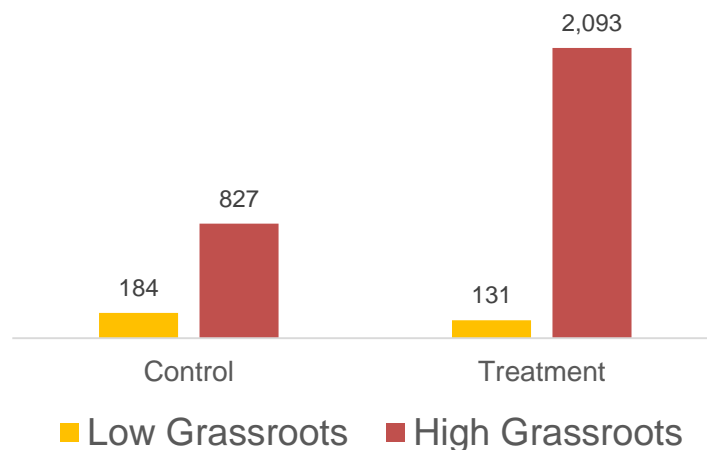


To answer the second question, Health Canada looked at website visits to Canada.ca and to TakeActionOnRadon.ca, specifically within the high grassroots and low grassroots communities.

2020 Website Visits:
Low vs. High Grassroots -
Canada.ca/Radon

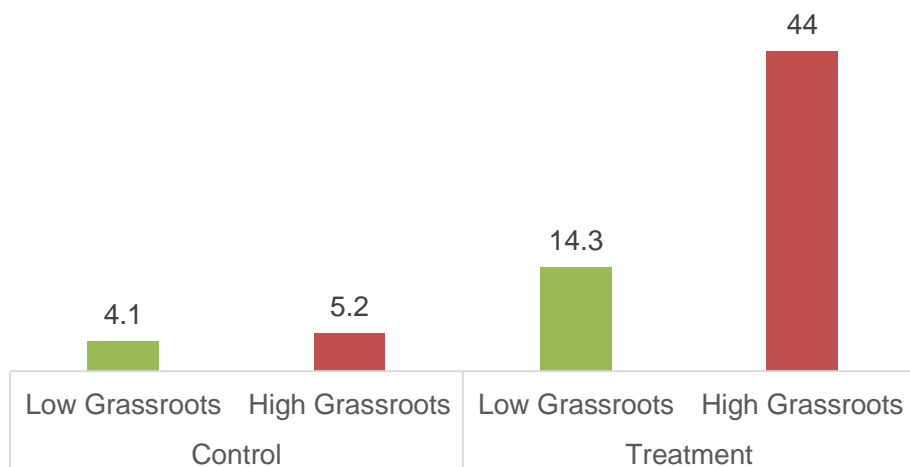


2020 Website Visits:
Low vs. High Grassroots -
TakeActiononRadon.ca

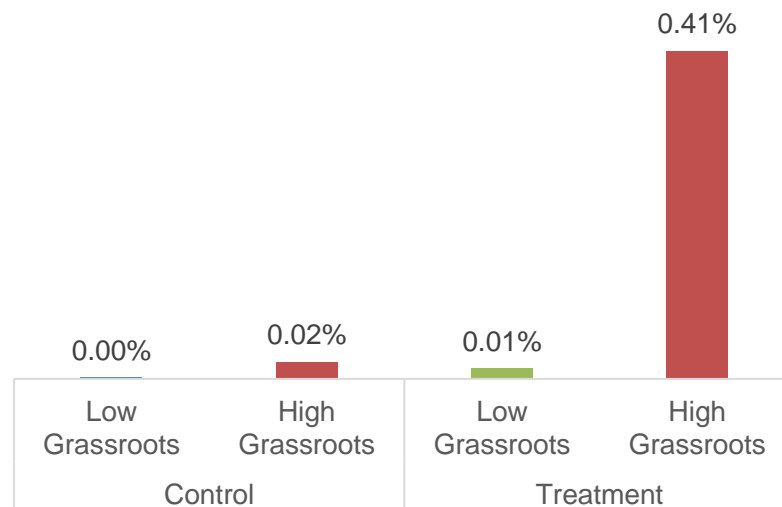


Health Canada also looked at test kits purchased between the control and treatment groups, specifically comparing low grassroots and high grassroots communities.

Average Number Test Kits Purchased



Percentage Test Kits Purchased



Health Canada developed and circulated a survey to industry stakeholders and regional radiation specialists to gather anecdotal information pertaining to the study.

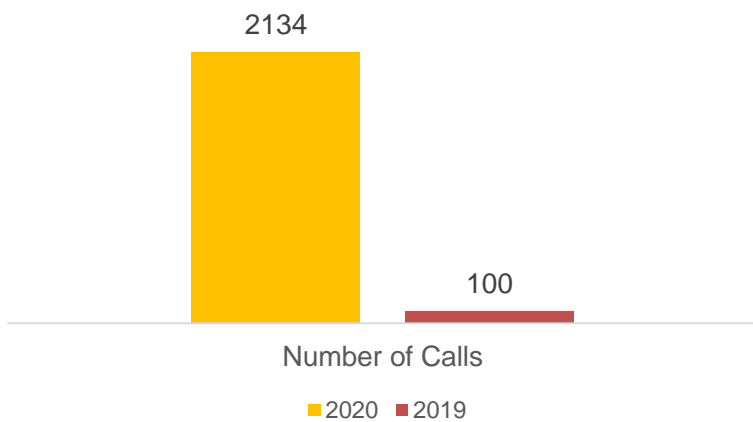
The survey received a total of 26 responses.

- 69% of industry stakeholders noticed a significant increase in engagement with Canadians via phone, email and website traffic.
- Almost 50% of industry stakeholders noticed an increase in testing and mitigation through certified mitigation professionals.
- 62% of industry stakeholders described the feedback they received as positive.
- 96% of industry stakeholders would support this type of activity in the future.

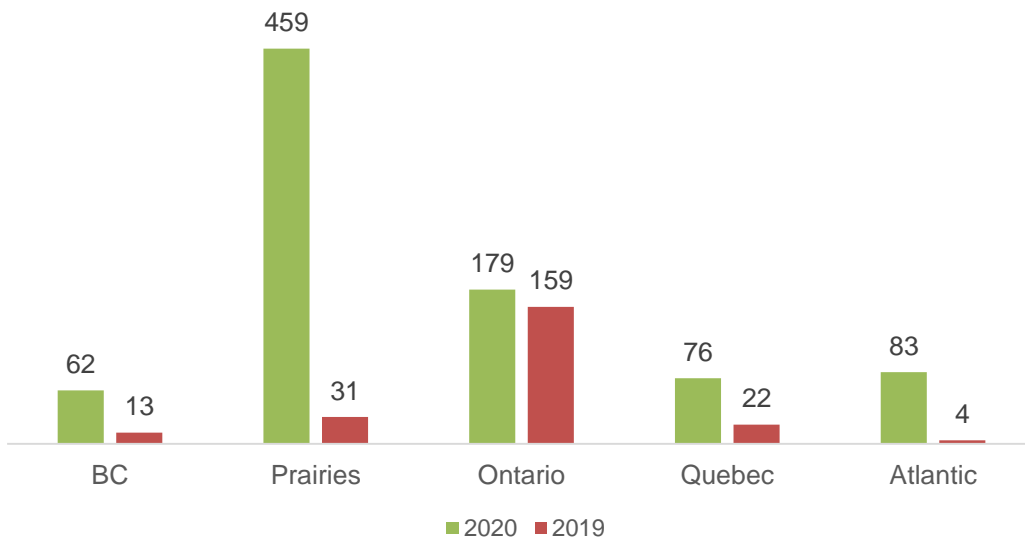
Health Canada's Call Centre experienced a significant spike in calls from January to March 2020 in comparison to 2019.

Health Canada's National Radon Program and Regional offices field calls from Canadians every day regarding radon. The chart below shows the increase in public inquires during the testing period, compared to 2019.

Health Canada Call Centre:
Q1 2020 vs. Q1 2019



Health Canada Public Enquiries:
Q1 2020 vs. Q1 2019



The goal of this study was to determine if Canadians living in areas with high grassroots efforts (i.e. pre-existing awareness and education about radon) were more likely to purchase a radon test kit than Canadians living in low grassroots communities.

The experiment asked two research questions:

- 1. Awareness:** Does a behaviourally-informed postcard increase awareness of radon among Canadians? How does this differ between high grassroots communities and low grassroots communities?
- 2. Testing:** Does a behaviourally-informed postcard increase the likelihood that Canadians will purchase a radon test kit? How does this differ between high grassroots communities and low grassroots communities?

In conclusion, the data found that a behaviourally informed postcard does increase awareness of radon among Canadians. This is clearly demonstrated in the increase, year over year, in the number of website visits for both Canada.ca and TakeActiononRadon.ca.

- Canada.ca saw a **4,188% increase** of website visits from Canadians living in treatment group municipalities, compared to a 100% increase of visits from Canadians living in control group municipalities.
- TakeActiononRadon.ca saw a **1,248% increase** of website visits from Canadians living in treatment group municipalities, compared to 151% increase of visits from Canadians living in control group municipalities.

A behaviourally informed postcard increases the likelihood that Canadians will purchase a radon test kit. This is clearly demonstrated when comparing the data for control vs. treatment groups.

However, this study showed that while behaviourally informed postcards significantly increase radon awareness, they do not significantly increase the behaviour of purchasing a radon test kit and home testing.

- In treatment FSAs there was an average of 58.3 test kits purchased, compared to 9.3 test kits in control FSAs.
- In treatment FSAs 0.54% of homes purchased a test kit, compared to 0.04% of homes in control FSAs.
- In treatment FSAs an average of 44 test kits were purchased in high grassroots areas, compared to 14.3 in low grassroots areas. In control FSA 5.2 test kits were purchased in high grassroots areas, compared for 4.1 test kits in low grassroots areas.

Moving Forward

Health Canada's National Radon Program has conducted two behavioural research studies that tested the impact of behaviourally informed postcards on radon awareness and radon test kit purchases.

Both studies have demonstrated that behaviourally informed postcards are highly effective at increasing radon awareness but only marginally effective at increasing radon test kit purchases by Canadians.

Based on the findings of our two most recent behavioural research studies, combined with existing research and data developed both in Canada and internationally, it is recommended that Health Canada take stronger action to assist Canadians in testing and, if necessary, mitigating their homes.