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NSAI Standards

Irish Standard
I.S. EN ISO 11665-11:2019

Measurement of radioactivity in the environment - Air: radon-222 - Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth (ISO 11665-11:2016)

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This document is based on:	*Published:*
EN ISO 11665-11:2019	2019-10-09

This document was published under the authority of the NSAI and comes into effect on:	ICS number:
2019-10-27	13.040.01 17.240
	NOTE: If blank see CEN/CENELEC cover page

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National Foreword

I.S. EN ISO 11665-11:2019 is the adopted Irish version of the European Document EN ISO 11665-11:2019, Measurement of radioactivity in the environment - Air: radon-222 - Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth (ISO 11665-11:2016)

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NORME EUROPÉENNE

EUROPÄISCHE NORM

EN ISO 11665-11

October 2019

ICS 13.040.01; 17.240

English Version

Measurement of radioactivity in the environment - Air: radon-222 - Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth (ISO 11665-11:2016)

Mesurage de la radioactivité dans l'environnement - Air: radon 222 - Partie 11: Méthode d'essai pour le gaz du sol avec un prélèvement en profondeur (ISO 11665-11:2016)

Ermittlung der Radioaktivität in der Umwelt - Luft: Radon-222 - Teil 11: Verfahren zur Probenahme und Prüfung von Bodenluft (ISO 11665-11:2016)

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European foreword

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INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 11665-11

First edition
2016-04-15

Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222 —

Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth

Mesurage de la radioactivité dans l'environnement — Air: radon 222 —

Partie 11: Méthode d'essai pour le gaz du sol avec un prélèvement en profondeur

Reference number
ISO 11665-11:2016(E)

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Foreword

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The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee ISO/TC 85, *Nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Radiological protection*.

ISO 11665 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222*:

— *Part 1: Origins of radon and its short-lived decay products and associated measurement methods*

— *Part 2: Integrated measurement method for determining average potential alpha energy concentration of its short-lived decay products*

— *Part 3: Spot measurement method of the potential alpha energy concentration of its short-lived decay products*

— *Part 4: Integrated measurement method for determining average activity concentration using passive sampling and delayed analysis*

— *Part 5: Continuous measurement method of the activity concentration*

— *Part 6: Spot measurement method of the activity concentration*

— *Part 7: Accumulation method for estimating surface exhalation rate*

— *Part 8: Methodologies for initial and additional investigations in buildings*

— *Part 9: Test methods for exhalation rate of building materials*

— *Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth*

The following part is under preparation:

— *Part 10: Determination of the diffusion coefficient in waterproof materials using activity concentration measurement*

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Introduction

Radon isotopes 222, 220 and 219 are radioactive gases produced by the disintegration of radium isotopes 226, 224 and 223, which are decay products of uranium-238, thorium-232 and uranium-235, respectively, and are all found in the Earth's crust. Solid elements, also radioactive, followed by stable lead are produced by radon disintegration[1].

When disintegrating, radon emits alpha particles and generates solid decay products, which are also radioactive (polonium, bismuth, lead, etc.). The potential effects on human health of radon lie in its solid decay products rather than the gas itself. Whether or not they are attached to atmospheric aerosols, radon decay products can be inhaled and deposited in the bronchopulmonary tree to varying depths according to their size.

Radon is today considered to be the main source of human exposure to natural radiation. Reference [2] suggests that, at the worldwide level, radon accounts for around 52 % of global average exposure to natural radiation. The radiological impact of isotope 222 (48 %) is far more significant than isotope 220 (4 %), while isotope 219 is considered negligible. For this reason, references to radon in this part of ISO 11665 refer only to radon-222.

Radon activity concentration can vary from one to multiple orders of magnitude over time and space. Exposure to radon and its decay products varies tremendously from one area to another, as it depends firstly on the amount of radon emitted by the soil and the building materials in each area and, secondly, on the degree of containment and weather conditions in the areas where individuals are exposed.

As radon tends to concentrate in enclosed spaces like houses, the main part of the population exposure is due to indoor radon. Soil gas is recognized as the most important source of residential radon through infiltration pathways. Other sources are described in other parts of ISO 11665 (building materials) and ISO 13164 (water).

Measurements of radon in the soil gas are performed for several applications dealing with radon risk management (drawing up of radon potential maps, defining radon-prone areas, characterization of radon potential of building sites, characterization of soil contaminated with radium-226, defining mitigation techniques to be applied in a building, verification of applied mitigation techniques, etc.), and phenomenological observation (understanding radon transport mechanisms in the soil and from the soil into the building, identification and analysis of radon entry parameters, gas activity measurement for survey of CO_2, volcanic eruption prediction, earthquake prediction, etc.).

The radon activity concentrations in the soil gas not only vary substantially at the season scale but also from day to day and even from hour to hour. It also varies in space in the horizontal, as well as the vertical dimension, depending on the following parameters characterizing the soil properties[3][4][5][19]:

— geochemical parameters of soils (mainly distribution of uranium and radium in soils and rocks and their localization influencing the radon emanation);

— physical parameters of all present layers of soils (grain size, permeability, porosity and effective porosity, soil moisture and water saturation, density);

— geological situation (thickness of Quaternary cover, weathering character of the bedrock, stratification, modification of layers by various antropogeneous activities);

— soil structure (deformation, presence of cracks);

— hydrological and geodynamic processes (transport of gaseous and liquid substances in porous and fractured environment, radium and radon in underground/fissure water);

— geomorphological situation (location of the area in a valley, on the slopes, or on the top of a hill);

— exogenous/meteorological factors (temperature, pressure, precipitation).

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Because of these fluctuations, standardized measurement protocols are needed in order to ensure accurate and consistent measurement results of radon in the soils to ensure that they can be compared in time and space.

Depending on the depth, the values usually found in the soil gas are normally between a few hundred becquerels per cubic metre and several hundred of thousand becquerels per cubic metre. Activity concentrations can reach several billions of becquerels per cubic metre in radium-rich soils.

Theoretically, the radon activity concentration in the soil gas can be defined for any variable depth below the ground surface and it generally increases with depth below the surface in an ideal homogeneous soil[6]. But there is a minimal depth below the ground surface, at which the parameter can be really measured. The minimal depth depends on the soil properties at a given place and on the measurement method used. In particular, it depends on the volume of the soil gas sample. When the depth below the ground surface is lower than the above mentioned minimal depth, the soil gas sample is diluted with atmospheric air and the real value of radon activity concentration in the soil gas is underestimated (see Annex A).

NOTE The origin of radon-222 and its short-lived decay products in the atmospheric environment and other measurement methods are described generally in ISO 11665-1.

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Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222 —

Part 11: Test method for soil gas with sampling at depth

1 Scope

This part of ISO 11665 describes radon-222 test methods for soil gas using passive and active in-situ sampling at depth comprised between surface and 2 m.

This part of ISO 11665 gives general requirements for the sampling techniques, either passive or active and grab or continuous, for in-situ radon-222 activity concentrations measurement in soil gas.

The radon-222 activity concentration in the soil can be measured by spot or continuous measurement methods (see ISO 11665-1). In case of spot measurement methods (ISO 11665-6), the soil gas sampling is active only. On the other hand, the continuous methods (ISO 11665-5) are typically associated with passive soil gas sampling.

The measurement methods are applicable to all types of soil and are determined according to the end use of the measurement results (phenomenological observation, definition or verification of mitigation techniques, etc.) taking into account the expected level of the radon-222 activity concentration.

These measurement methods are applicable to soil gas samples with radon activity concentrations greater than 100 Bq/m^3.

NOTE This part of ISO 11665 is complementary with ISO 11665-7 for characterization of the radon soil potential.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 10381-7, *Soil quality — Sampling — Part 7: Guidance on sampling of soil gas*

ISO 11665-1, *Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222 — Part 1: Origins of radon and its short-lived decay products and associated measurement methods*

ISO 11665-5, *Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222 — Part 5: Continuous measurement method of the activity concentration*

ISO 11665-6, *Measurement of radioactivity in the environment — Air: radon-222 — Part 6: Spot measurement method of the activity concentration*

ISO 11929, *Determination of the characteristic limits (decision threshold, detection limit and limits of the confidence interval) for ionizing radiation measurements — Fundamentals and application*

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