

Florida Department of Health • Ana M. Viamonte-Ros, M.D., M.P.H., State Surgeon General

the health advisor

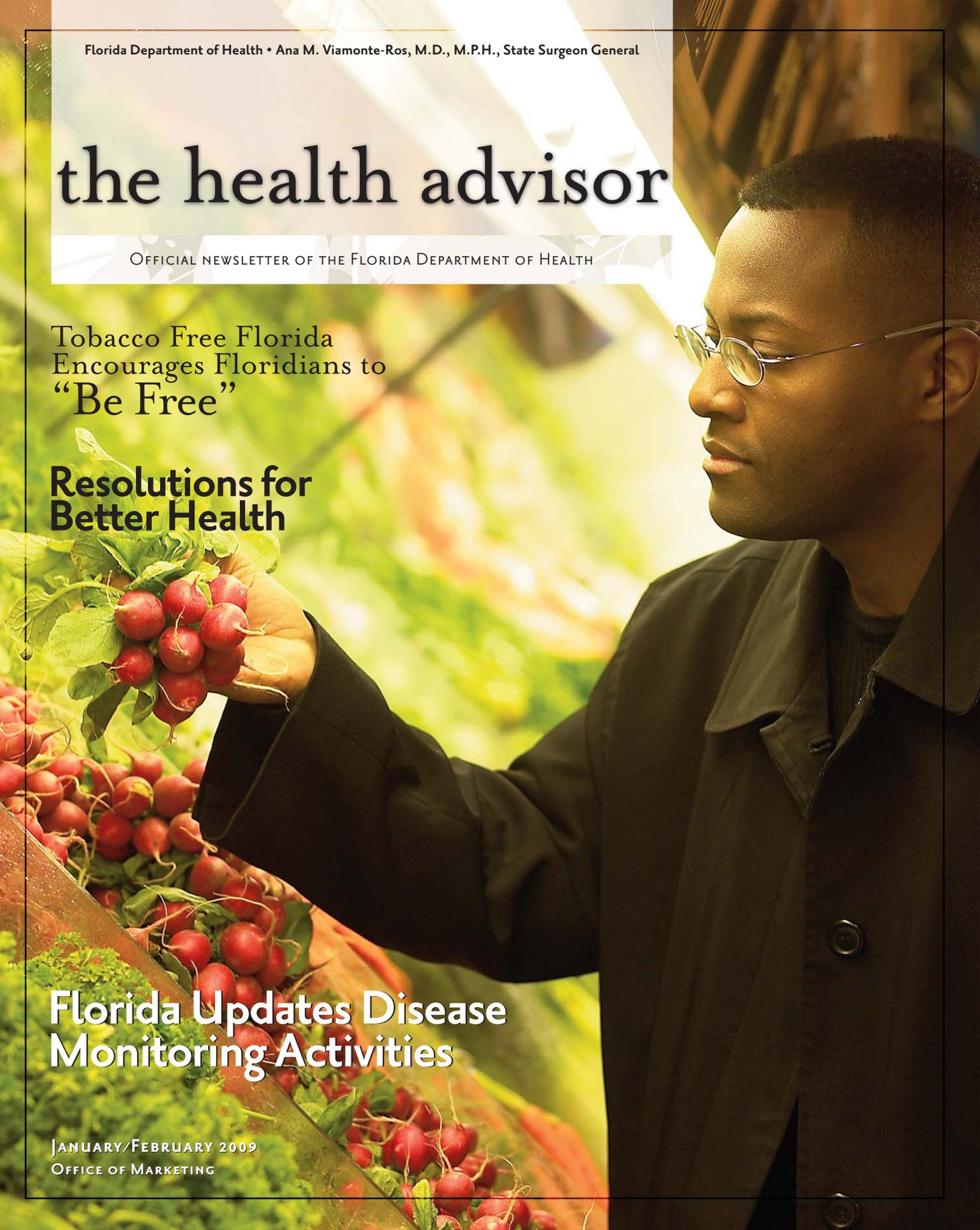
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

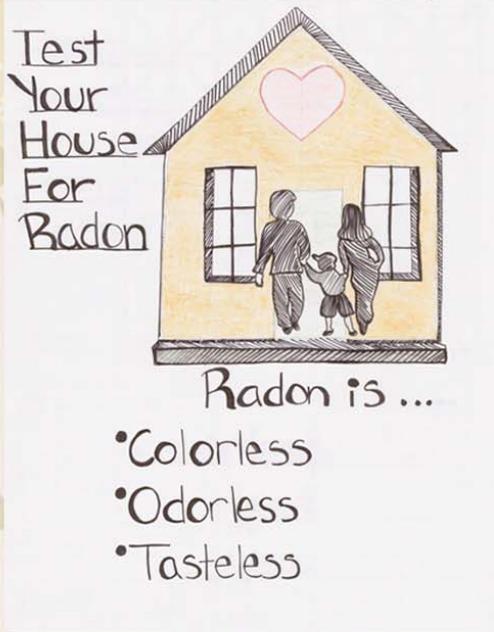
Tobacco Free Florida
Encourages Floridians to
“Be Free”

**Resolutions for
Better Health**

**Florida Updates Disease
Monitoring Activities**

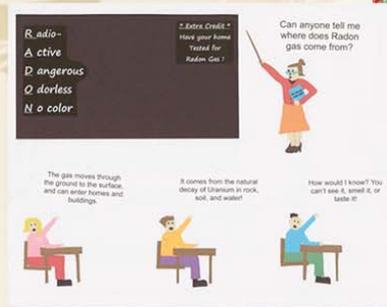
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009
OFFICE OF MARKETING





RAQUEL GOLDMAN: FIRST PLACE, FLORIDA;
SECOND PLACE, NATIONAL

2009 Florida State Radon Poster Contest Winners Announced



KARLA BRIDGETTE AVENDANO:
HONORABLE MENTION, FLORIDA



SONICAH SANON:
HONORABLE MENTION, FLORIDA

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) is honored to announce the winner of the 2009 Florida State Radon Poster Contest: Raquel Goldman.

Goldman, 13, attends the Hollywood Academy of Arts and Science in Hollywood, Florida. Taking Honorable Mention distinctions are Karla Bridgette Avendano, 13, from Hollywood Academy of Arts and Science and Sonicah Sanon, 12, from Jose de Diego Middle School. These students' posters were selected from 176 entries. The purpose of the statewide contest is to highlight the risks posed by exposure to indoor radon.

Raquel Goldman, Karla Bridgette Avendano and Sonicah Sanon's posters were also entered in the National Radon Poster Contest sponsored by the National Safety Council and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Last year, Sara Garcia of Hollywood Academy of Arts and Science won the national contest. This year, Raquel Goldman placed second at the national level.

"I applaud the efforts of all these students who took time to learn about radon and educate their fellow Floridians about the hazard," said Dr. Lisa Conti, Director of the DOH Division of Environmental Health.

Florida participants' entries are posted on the DOH Web site, and poster winners from all states are available for viewing at the National Safety Council's Web site, www.nsc.org/issues/radon. The winners of the National Poster Contest, along with a parent and sponsor, will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., to attend the national award ceremony this month.

Radon is a naturally occurring, colorless, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas found in Florida and all over the United States. Nationally, an average of 1 out of 15 homes

has elevated radon and in Florida, about 1 out of 7 homes. Radon is found in all regions of Florida and in all types of residences whether they are old or new, a one-story house or a 20-story condominium.

Radon gas decays into radioactive particles that can get trapped in your lungs when you breathe. As they break down further, these particles release small bursts of energy that can damage lung tissue and lead to lung cancer over the course of your lifetime. Not everyone exposed to elevated levels of radon will develop lung cancer, and the amount of time between exposure and the onset of the disease may be many years.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Academy of Sciences estimate about 21,000 Americans die each year from radon-induced lung cancer. The U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon is the number one cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, and the second leading cause of lung cancer after cigarette smoking.

The level of radon exposure in homes, schools and other buildings can be determined by a simple, inexpensive test that can be purchased at home improvement stores; another option is to hire a state-certified radon testing company. Testing for radon is easy and effective. If elevated levels are detected, techniques can be used to lower the levels.

For more information about radon, visit www.doh.state.fl.us/Environment/community/radon/index.html.