

Bryant and Trisha - A Sarpy County Family Shares Their Story

When Bryant and Tricia purchased their Sarpy County home in June 2018 it seemed like the perfect home to meet their family's needs. However, they soon discovered the home was in need of costly repairs to help ensure it was safe, comfortable and energy efficient. Unfortunately, like many home owners, especially those with limited income, they could not afford to do the repairs.

Tricia stated that the handicapped accessible addition of their two story home, where their foster son and elderly parent stayed, had little if any insulation. "The lack of insulation resulted in higher than expected utility costs and the on-going effort of trying to keep the space somewhat comfortable. We had to utilize additional fans during the hot summer months and space heaters during the cold winter months," shares Tricia. Then, if things weren't already challenging enough, members of their household started having 'flu like' symptoms such as tiredness and headaches. This was an added concern as COVID-19 had started impacting Nebraska in the spring of 2020. While the family didn't have COVID-19, some of their symptoms were similar, to what was then a family of nine, including foster children, were experiencing.

As per her mom's suggestion, Tricia began searching for a local agency that might be able to help them and she was referred to SENCA. Within six months of submitting their application the actual process began. Josh Ninceheler, SENCA's Quality Control Inspector (QCI)/Radon Mitigation Specialist, completed the initial inspection of the home and discovered high carbon monoxide levels. Josh also performed a test for radon. As suspected, the test revealed the home contained high levels of radon, thereby qualifying the home to be mitigated, the process to help eliminate the trapped radon gas from their home.

SENCA utilized funding from Weatherization and Radon Mitigation programs, in addition to funding provided by Omaha Public Power District (OPPD), to complete the necessary work. The home received much needed insulation in the floor of the handicapped accessible addition, along with insulation in the attic and garage. An exhaust fan was installed in the bathroom and two of the existing entry doors were replaced.

A year after receiving SENCA's help Tricia shares "Our home is more comfortable, the air conditioner and heater run less often, not continuously as before we received assistance, which helps reduce utility costs." Tricia adds "SENCA was great to work with and completed the project in a professional and respectful manner. Our home is now more energy efficient, healthier and safer for our family."